

Ex S^h Writting Schoolemaister

or

The Arctomie of Faire Writing

Wherein is exactlie expressed each severall character,
Together with other Rules & Documents, coincident
to the Art of Faire & Speedy writing

By Iohn Davies of Heref.

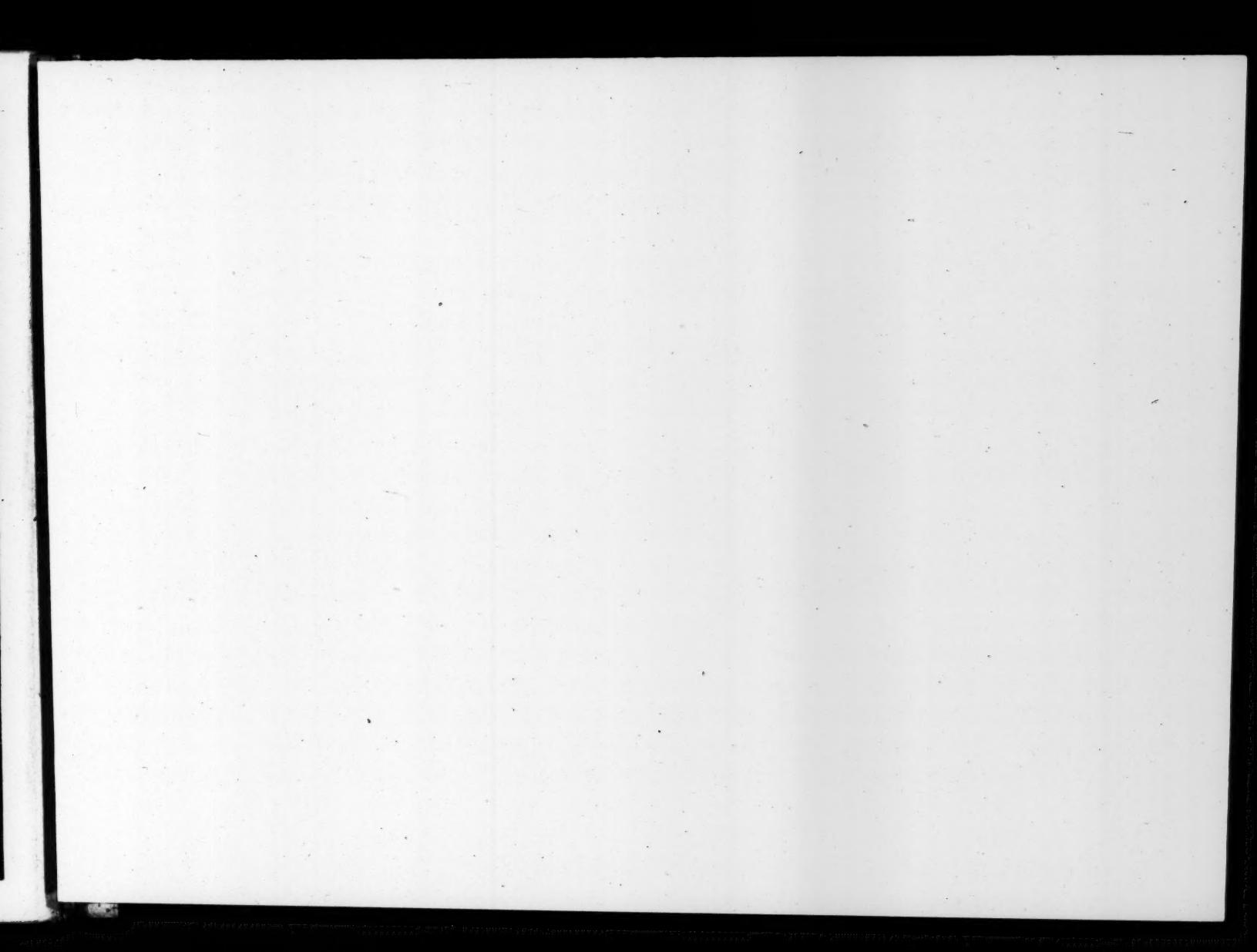
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THE LIVELY PORTRAITURE
OF JOHN DAVIES OF HEREFORD

The Writing Scholemaster
The Anatomy of Faire Writing. Wherein is exactlie expressed
severall Character, Together with other Rules and, Documents
coincident to the Art of faire & speedy writing, 1631



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THE WRITING SCHOOL-MASTER, OR THE ANATOMY OF FAIR WRITING.

Wherein is exactly expressed each severall character, together with the rules and documents coincident to the art of fair and speedy writing.

ince the rules of the faculty of fair writing, do not, nor ever can profit till they be put in practise, (for speculation herein doth little avail) I have thought good for the well employing of my talent (whereof I am accountable) and the profit of others, which I am in Christian duty bound to further, to publish my knowledge herein, aswell for the instruction and help of those that by their own endeaveours without teachers, would attain some perfection in so be-hovewill and usefull a qualitie; as also for the ease of writing school-masters, who of necessity must know them, if speedily and dexteriously they will learn their scholars to write according to their common undertakings.

To such school-masters then it shall be expedient, to will the scholar to write two or three words in his presence, thereby to see the apt or unapt disposition of his hand, and how he holds his pen: wherein if he fail to do as might be wished, the more shall the teacher deserve for teaching him: for it were better to teach some naturally apt to write, for foure shillings; then some others of more yeares and discretion, for ten pound.

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The next thing the teacher is to do when he hath undertaken to teach, is to rectifie his scholars holding of his pen, if need be; which is to place his thumbe on the side of the pen next his breast highest of all: The fore-finger next, place upon the top of the pen extended downward, flat a little beneath the thumbe: and lastly, the middle finger on the furthest side of the pen lowest of all: The two fingers being in a manner extended to their utmost length, the thumbe onely rising in the joyn, which if it be bowed in (as sometimes of some I have seen it) impossible it is, that that hand should write fair or fast. The *Italian* holds his pen between his fore-finger and thumbe stretched at length, which for that hand, written with light and easie pulse, is among them found to be the best holding. But with the *French*, *Dutch*, and us (*English*) that write more solid and substantiall hands, it is utterly amisse to hold the pen so: for so should we never write so steadily, full and fairly, as we do the bodies of many of our letters, (great and small) requiring a good poize of the pen to effect their naturall fulnesse, without which, they would be livelesse. In which respect, never saw I yet a woman that could write our English secretary hand lively, though the *Romane* or *Italian* hand somly: because they naturally lack strength in their hand to perform those full strokes, and (as it were) to bruise a letter as men can do.

The next care must be, after the holding of the pen, to see to the scholars holding of his body, and how he should sit to write: Namely, with his breast from the board or desk whereat he writes: to hold his head upright, to look straight, his arm laid right forth on the paper: That is, his elbow to be even with the end of the midst of the sheet of paper, which paper must lie as neare to the midst of his body, as the streight holding out of his arm will permit it.

Then to teach him to take up his ink (with the hollow side of his pen downward) sparingly, and not too plentifully: for being too full, he shall never write clean; the ink will run out of the pen so hastily and abundantly.

When the Master hath thus done, he shall take a small pair of compasses of brasie or iron, made so at the ends, as they not cut the paper in ruling it (for a young writers hand, whose pulse is not so nimble, needeth at first the help of his instrument) and ruling a side of paper with the same, the compasses being set of the depth of his writing, making a double line, let the scholar or beginner make his letters between these two lines, to keep them even at head and foot: Which will

3

will likewise help the master in his demonstration, and the scholar in his apprehension: for this is most easie to be understood of the learner, when the teacher shall say, Put up such a stroke, slope or upright above the upper line: or so much slope or downward beneath the lower line, to make such or such a letter: where if there were not the like times, hardly could be the like demonstration given.

Then teach him to know the terms or words of art, which you use in teaching. To wit, your slope or down-right Parrellell strokes, that is, strokes equidistant: your Traverse strokes, that is, a crosse stroke, as the stroke through the *t* *f* *k* and *g*: your Waved stroke, as that in the *Roman* L. your Stem, as that in the length of the *l* *b* *k* &c. Your Bell, as the bolts in the top of the *Roman* or *Italian* hands; your Thred, as the joyning small stroke that unites words; your Equidistances (which is the geometriall proportion of fair writing) and the like, ere you proceed to further instruction, that he may understand you, as you go forward: else these and the like terms will perplex his understanding by the way, and so hinder his proceeding.

Foure letters, and no more should the master teach his scholar in a day, although he be such a one as hath a most tractable hand; to the end to lay a more sure foundation, and get the firmer habit in making them: Which foure letters let the master make in the presence of his scholar, twice or thrice leisurely, and piece after piece, shewing him the effect of the pen, and how and when to apply the side or full mouth thereof in the forthing of those letters. And if the scholar in his imitation misse his direction, then to shew him wherein, and in what joyns or point he hath erred; and if yet he misse in following that demonstration, let him often go over the letters with a dry pen, the better to acquaint his hand with their shape and draught, which hath a powerfull operation to that purpose.

The master may also with a Plummet of lead, or any other thing (made somewhat sharp at the point) fashion out the letters, and cause the learner to go over them with his wet pen, untill he shall come to some facility in making them truely. And this write I for the benefit of the teacher, and every young learner. Howbeit I will not deny, but that one may learn to write without a master (as I my self have done) if he hath the copie exactly written before him: for we see many who having imitated written copies of the best, have attained by their own diligent practise and observation to curious and exact hands, but yet much more speedily and exquisitely

shall they learn, who to such copies shall have the help of a skillfull and judicious master, as reason it self perswades, and triall approves.

The pen must agree with the paper: for paper royall, or demy paper, or any paper that hath a hard and croffe grain (such as commonly merchants make their books of accounts of) must have a pen full hard and dry, else it will be apt to spirle, and not endure the roughnes of the paper, which like a whetstone will grinde blunt the edge of the pen in a short space.

When you should write fast on fine paper, your pen should be somewhat small, yet very dry, being made of the second or third in the wing.

To young children whose hands are weak, give a small pen made of a soft quill. The new pen that is made to write most clean and curious (by reason of the subtilty of the knowledge to cut the letter most neat) is soon dulled and marred with the least hard or rough handling: for that pen must be cherished with indulgent and light using, in respect of the tendernesse of the edge.

The hard pen naturally causeth the hand to runne with difficulty, and therefore most unfit for a fast hand: howbeit hardly can a set-hand be written clean and uniform, without an hard pen.

Your body set, your paper put, and your pen held as before is said, you shall make your letters according to the copies in this book, joyning one letter with another with light and nimble pulse, having a speciall eye to the last syllable which you have made, to the end to match it in evennesse, fuhnesse, or leannessse, and so to unite syllable after syllable, and word after word, with such conformity as may be most gracefull to the eye; having alwayes great regard to the last letters both of syllables and words, that so they which are to follow may be uniform, which will make the hand shew fair, though the letters be not so exactly made, as might (per-adventure) be wished.

Now the space between each letter shall be according to the matter that is to be written: for in a petition or any other thing of that nature you shall write small, and set your letters as close together as possible you can, thereby to include much matter in few lines. But in an Evidence or Indenture you shall write full, and set the letters much more wide one from another, because it best becomes a deed of continuance, and a witnessesse of contracts to posteritie.

In wide lines, the writing doth soonest discover the goodnesse or badnesse of it self. And in such lines, it is most gracefull to make long stemmes and tayles to your letters, so as they touch not one the

the other: for that not onely shewes the freenesse of the hand, but also fills up the overmuch wide space between the lines, which else would seem too naked.

Moreover, as it is no great furtherance to them that do but as yet learn to write, to write Dis-
Eates or Transcripts of pleadings with a disorderly fastnesse: so to him that hath gotten an habit
of a fast hand already, it resignes it more and more, making it thereby the more bold, ready and
spiritly, for oftentimes we may see fall from the hand of such a fast writer, passing gracefull and
spiritly letters, sith they are made with a light, nimble, and ready pulse. The contrary whereof is
ever leen to proceed from those teachers and scholars, that onely write slow set hands, who
using to write leisurely and heavily, do, when they should write with expedition, finde their hands
so unruly, wilde and unstayed, that they are not at their own command, running into many un-
certainties and incongruities; nay, scarce make one spiritly word or letter: so apt are they to
write a Clark-like fast hand (which is the queen of hands in respect of generall use) who alwaies
are plodding in setting but two or three line copies of the slow set hand, as they to their cost
and losse of time do prove, who learn of them, for very hardly can two *contraries* be made to
hold any correspondence, to wit, lightnesse of hand required in fast writing, and heavinessse of
hand incident to the set and slow.

But what go I about utterly to take away the set slow hand, as if there were no use of it at all? Farre be it from me, for too well I know how gracefull and expedient it is, in Ingrostments of all kindes so to do: howbeit, this withall I averre, That the form of the set Secretary letter now in use in England, might be made much more apt for fastnes, yet altogether as fair: for as we now make our set Secretary letters in their severall parts and pieces, impossible is it, that they should runne speedily about the businesse in hand; which made me not onely to abreviate, but also to borrow of the Romane, and devise many letters apt to slide away and look well; which I obtraded into our Secretary hand. But now time, truth, and experience, convincing their understandings, all Secretaries, Clarks of the Councel, and others finding by proof how gracefull they are, and ready for use, and linking with other letters, they wholly embrace and use them altogether in their writings. Yet was I by many (nay by all) writing School-masters (ignorant of my reasons and reach herein, and who thought it a kinde of sacrilege, to violate our old form of letter and writing) much blamed for my labour, as proudly affecting novelty and singularity, not knowing that

time, reason, and industry in every Art and Science, findes out that which is most gracefull and ready. And every humane proposition hath as much authority as another, if reason make not the difference, putting that in practice, and abolishing the contrary, though more ancient.

These men whien they be intreated to shew their running hand, or facile writing, evade alwaies the doing thetoof in sight, by some shift or other: and if they shew it already done, if it be disliked, as commonly it is, they excuse both it and themselves, either saying, I wrote it carelesly, or else, in great haste by candle light. When indeed they write that fast form of letter, as slowly as the Set, and with all possible industry and care, by reason their hand hath but a slow imitation, not the habit thereof. And if it happen that they are to write expedite in the presence of some Peere or great Person, to shew their facility in their faculty, when they cannot have the ruler, Stanch-grain, and such like helps, then are they an houre about three or four deformed unsightly and crooked lines, if they be won to write so much, which hardly they will be, writing as if they were shaken with a Feaver; when being justly found fault with for it, they shape these or the like excuses, To day Sir, I am not in the vaine of writing, I am not mine own man, I have been at some violent exercise which shakes my hand; this ink is too thick, it will not runne out of the pen: this paper is full of haires, it is so course and crosse grained, a man cannot write on it without spoiling his pen at every letter: or else it is so thyme or hollow, that the ink soaks through it, I stood in mine own light, the pen writes too big, too hard, too small, too soft: this Penknife will not cut, this Table joggeth; the light is imperfect, and a thousand the like. Thus would they willingly passe it over without writing a word: or if they be pressed to write, then write they first three or four words, and so give a dash with the pen, shewing thereby rather a proffer to do, then any boldnesse or perfection in doing: so that indeed they are altogether to seek, when of great Personages they should be found to answer expectations, or the same that many times their gaudy Tables cause the ignorant to spread of them.

It is true indeed, that the Set-hand may be retained with the fast-hand, though they require severall pulses to write them, aswell as the Text-hands, & the set Secretary. And the light strokes in the Italick, and the great blotted strokes, which require some strength and poise of hand, but yet with difficulty and much use. And it is as true, that some hands are naturally apt for the Set, and some for the fast-hand; and if those that are apt to the fast-hand learn a Set-hand of a School-ma-
ster

ster that onely is fit for, and altogether useth the slow Set-hand, the scholar will write even that hand also faster then his master, with half a quarter of his masters use.

There are many Imposters that (aswell in London as in other good cities and towns of England) undertake to teach perfectly in two and twenty houres, or a moneth at most, themselves (poore souls mean while) not able to judge of, much lesse perform perfect writing. Can they that have worn out twenty, thirty, or forty yeares (perhaps) to reach the ground of perfect writing, and yet come farre too short (with line and plummet) of what they reach after, teach a childe unpractised and unapt (peradventure) to gage such depth in a moneth at most? Alas, who seeth not how fraudfull these men are, and injurious as well to other (more honest and sufficient) teachers, as to the common-wealth, whereof they would be held more necessary members: Might I speak it without vaunt, I think there is no Englishman that hath taken more pains to finde out the ready way to attain this knowledge, or is able to render a better account for his profit therein, or (which is more) can teach the learner more easie and ready waies, and means to attain this end, then my self; for besides a naturall propensity to this quality, (wherewith I was alwayes endowed) I have added much time and diligence to touch the ground of fair writing, having all the best writers, and most exquisite master piece (as it were) of this age and of all nations, to further my desires and mother-wit (I thank God for it) not resisting me therein; yet will I not undertake (hand over head as they do) to teach perfectly in that time tribled. I will say (as the truth is) I can teach an indifferent capacity, to know all the rules of writing in two or three dayes, and make him able to make a slow and unready use of them for three or four lines, but to make any, though of never so good apprehension and aptnesse, to write boldly as if he had attained a perfect good habit, that will I not, unles I were willing (as too many are) to deceive the world, discredit my self, and frustrate the learner of his expectation. A smooth pretence fortified with strong protections (though contrary to probability) doth many times convince the judgement of the ignorant, and make them give largely to receive little or nothing: for how do such discredit the cunning and well tongued figure flinger, that in case of losse, they are superinduced to give for meer roving conjectures much, to make their losse greater: gaining thereby nought but derision of the truly wise, for their overmuch credulity of the cunningly dishonest: and if so of others, then why not so in this? We are all apt to beleieve what sorts with our desires,

defites, and are easily caught in snares pliant to our wills: this makes so many buy repentence so deare, so as the shew for which they pay, answers not the tenth part (many times) of the substance which they expect.

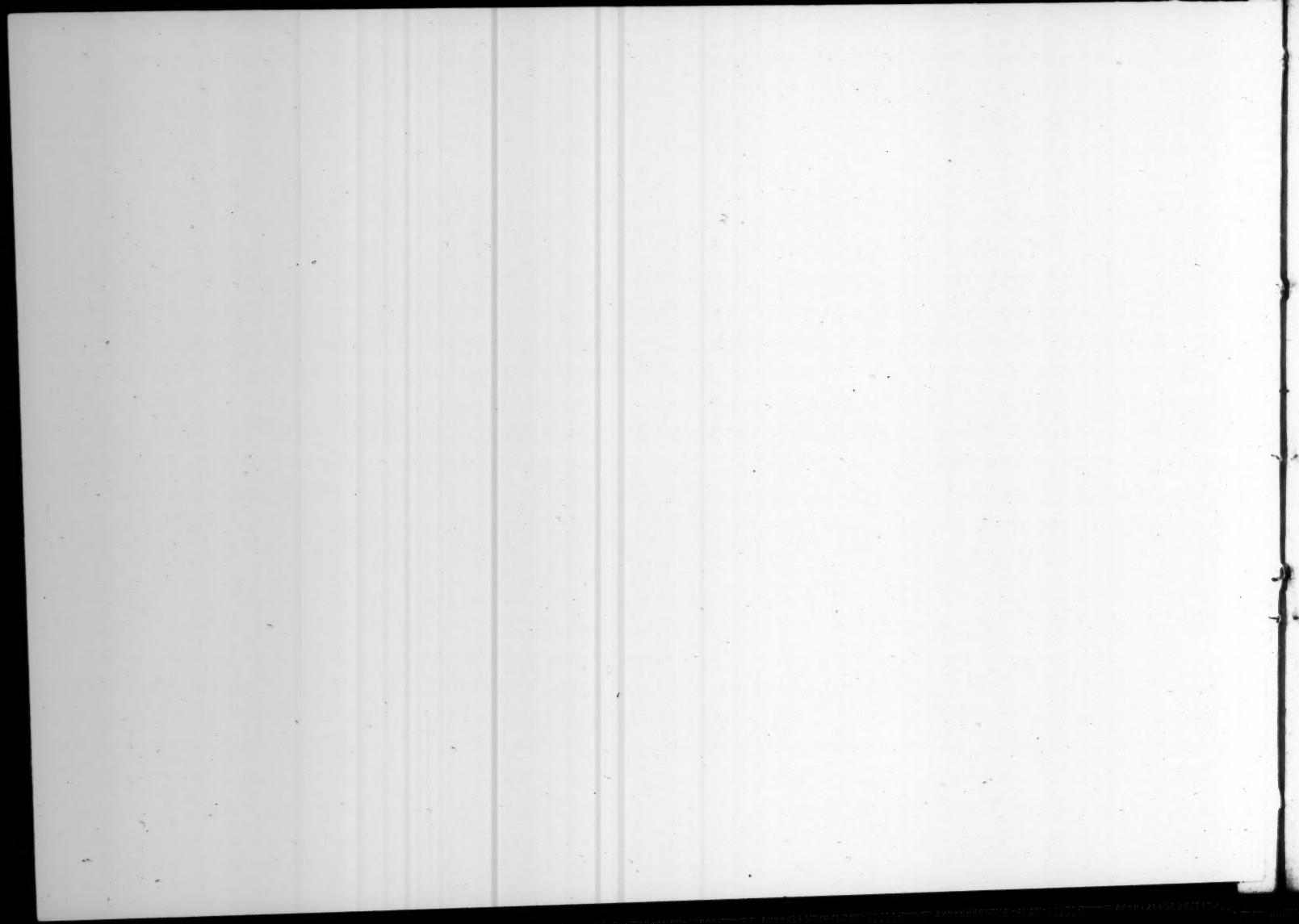
Writing indeed of all other manuall qualities is the most difficult, necessary, and excellent: for in the art of Limming, Painting, Clocking, Graving and the like; if they misse of those wheels, draughts, limmes and strokes, which they desire to make that are professors of them, they may mend them again with a second correction ere they finally do them; but exquisite writing is so peremptory, that if at first it be mist, it is not to be amended: therefore the hand had need to be stayed, that must runne with such assurance at once without error or further correction. In which respect, there are fewer in an age that attain to exact writing, then in any other quality whatsoever performed with the hand: so that if such as have gotten some good perfection therein, will be dishonest, they may egregiously abuse the world, that in this mysterie is ignorant, and make men dearly pay for, *Had I mist.*

And this I thought fit to write, to learn those that are yet to learn, that they be not taught wit at too deare a rate in stead of writing (as perhaps they may think) at a low price. Give learning to a wicked will, it is armed villany, and give a handsome shew of skill to a wicked heart, it will deceive you with facility.

Look but upon the tables and shews of our Writers in London as ye passe (if you can passe for such shews) and you shall see the meanest will profess there to teach with as much expedition and perfection, as any whatsoever, without exception; when as yet (good men) they are more to seek in the matter of exact writing, then very many scholars of two moneths practise; which is a wonderfull impudency, and fraudulent custome to catch the ignorant, utterly discrediting the profession of the pen in this kinde: which made me weary of it, and to seek other means (lesse excepted against) to sustain me as a free-man.

It is true that all men cannot be excellent in their profession; for, God hath, and still doth dispose diversly of his gifts, to some more, to some lesse, as it pleaseth his divine goodnes. Nor should those to whom he hath given with displaied hand, scorn those to whom he hath been lesse bountifull, for that were to abuse both Giver and gift: but rather to supply the others defect with their abundance, as charity wills and good nature requires: but few shall a man light upon, that had not rather





rather continue in their ignorance, then be made more cunning by a better teacher, to proud
and false-conceited are they in their mere want.

Besides, if needs they will teach, (sith perhaps need constraines them) they should avoid that arrogancy in comparison, that provokes the more expert to lay open their insufficiency, for the nature of man is so full of frailty, that the least provocation makes him to shew it, though grace peradventure check him for it; and hardly can the skilfull endure the arrogancy of the unskilfull, without some rip to make them remember their forgetting of themselves in point of causeleſſe presumption. I make no doubt but many that are hereby touched, will say (perhaps) I likewise arrogate too much to my self, as if (forsooth) all knowledge for the matter of writing were exchequered onely in me, and that my pen hath runne too liberally upon this rotigh ground, of taxing and grayelling other men, well thought of for their sufficiency in this quality. To whom briefly I reply but this, My speech concerns none that are really sufficient (whereof there are God wot, too too few) but those that are thought so of the ignorant (through false pretence) and are not. At those indeed I drive, sith they are aptest and likeliest to deceive; especially, undertaking (as they do) what they cannot perform. If my speech smack of arrogancy in the judgement of the indifferent, that be imputed to the juycē which I suckt with other humane creatures from Adams apple; But if it be no more then the best judgements of strangers, others can vouchsafe me, it is but equity that maligners may perhaps call arrogancy; yet howsoever, I confess I should do farre better, if I thought farre worse of my sufficiency herein, for it is none of mine own, then why should I be proud of anothers? I will therefore strive not to be proud, but in spight of pride and the author thereof I will be glad, sith it was my Maker that sent me it, in favours to use it a while to his glory and mine own comfort: yet as no fool said once in his own (now costly) experience;

*Who ever wins renown above the rest,
With heaps of hate shall (lightly) be opprest.*

So it is the lot of all that are most bound to God for gifts, to be maligned, especially in their own country. Men are as impatiens of others glory, as their own shame, which is a shame obscuring all glory. Pan dares oppose his rustick pipe to Apollos heavenly harp, and Mi-

des dares judge of both ; yea, preferre *Pans* rural piping, before *Apollo's* most mellodious playing.

No teacher now almost (custome hath made it so common, and one learns of another) but is impudent enough to make the ignorant beleive that they dare write, with whom not : and dare contend (might it cost them but shame onely) with whom they care not: the weight of the wager (much against their wills) suppresseth their contending causelesse pride, so that they more fear the losse of their money then their reputation; the reason's at hand, they have no reputation to lose. But I have blotted too much paper with clearing the practise of men, too full of blots, yet not altogether purposeles, sith some may beware of them by this my deciphering them; so do I thereby guard the innocent, and defeat the deceitfull, which I think is no ill office, how ere they ill esteem it.

Now to return to matter of instruction : The false rule (to those that cannot write without it straight and steadily) serveth in like stead as a bridle doth to colts, wherewith their breakers use to bring them to a sure and comely pace, till they have so well learned to go without tripping or gunning aside, as never to forget the perfectnesse of their pace again ; for in a round paced secretary hand, it were too great a servitude to be bound alwayes to the ruled or false line; howbeit I must confess (as reason perswades) that in the set slow hand (where the beauty and perfection, not the time and helpe wherewith it is written, is respected) it is necessary to use the ruled line; for those that write without, have two cares upon them, namely, to make perfect letters well joyned, and to write straight; but also the others care that write by the help of a ruled line, is to make exact letters well joyned, he is sure to write straight. But the round shallow facile secretary hand hath with it the gallantest grace, and may be written without line, with most bravery, being (as I said) the very emperesse of all hands for universality of use, and quicknesse of dispatch : yet must I likewise say (according to truth) that that hand fits not Engroſſments, such as we use in England, which are commonly done in a full deep and wide loose hand, between a fast and a set hand, commonly called an engroſſing hand. The like is used in the Prerogative Court-office for registering of wils, as also in the Kings chief Auditors office, in their Audit-books: these few cases and places alone excepted, the set slow secretary hand is of small use, nor is it altogether true that some who cannot write the fast hand do affirme saying, That a fast hand comes necessarily from a set hand,

hand; they may as well say too, it comes from a test hand: for there is no less similitude between the letters of the bastard text, and the fast hand, then there is between the precise set Secretary and the fast, for almost all their letters are unlike. Therefore were I to teach a Scriveners man unexpert, or any other that must use both a set and fast hand, I would teach him both, as if I taught two severall hands, shewing ever by the way, what affinity one letter hath with another, and wherein they differ; for which I would (as in reason I should) demand no less, then if I taught the Roman and Secretary which are severall hands.

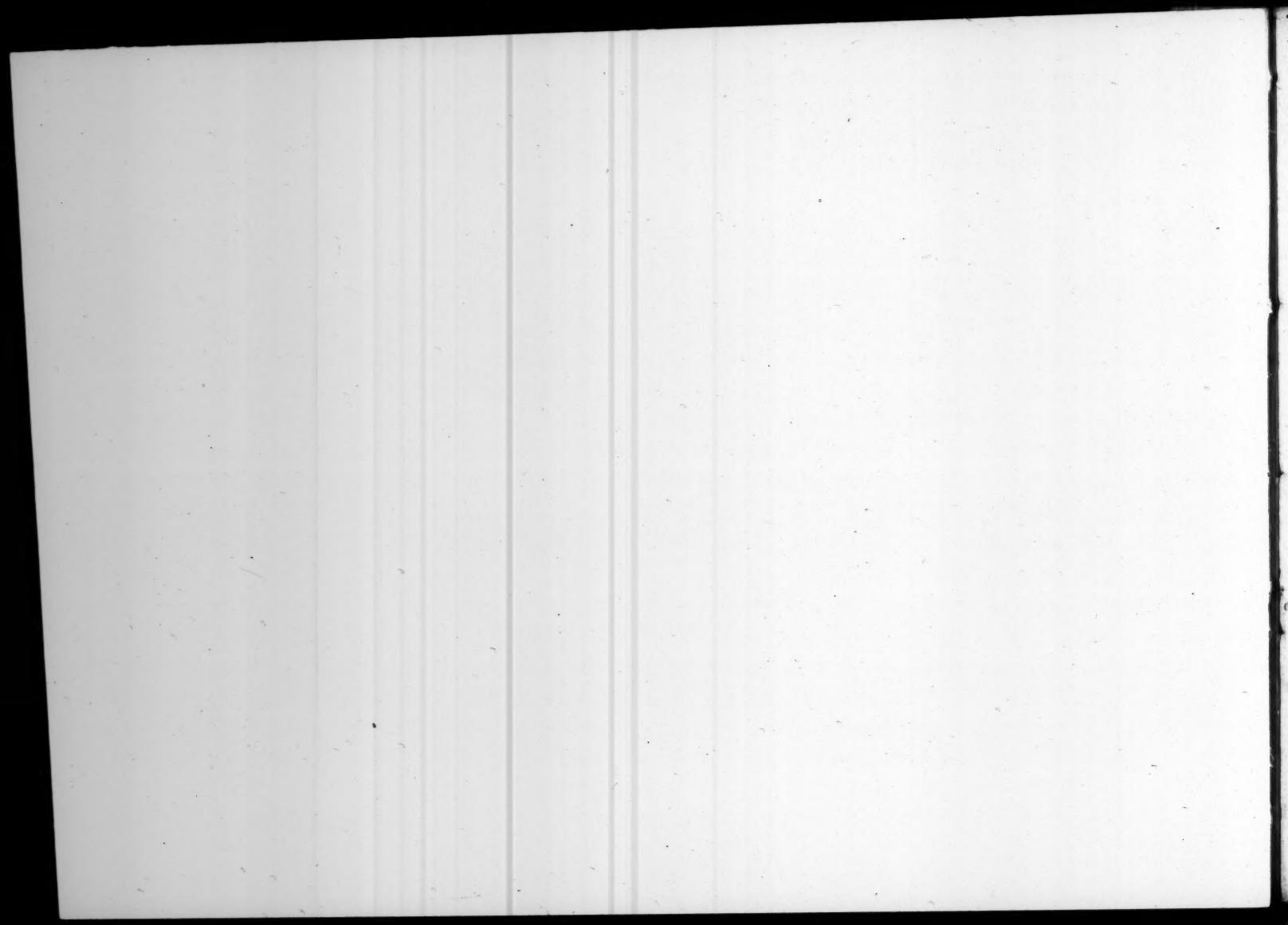
Likewise, for the *Italian*, I say as for the facile or coursive English Secretary-hand, sith both are written with like pulse and kinde of writing, it is a most usefull, lively, gracefull and ready hand, and by so much better and more to be desired then the old ordinary slow Romane hand, as the pen is more seldom taken off the paper in writing whole words or lines then in the Romane hand it is: for in this it is taken up at every letter, which makes it to go more heavily away, so that it soon growes tedious to the writer that takes up much time to write little matter: as it well appeared to our late Prince *Henry*, taught by me this dull slow hand, (taking the pen up at every letter) who albeit he were most apt, ingenious, and docible, as well in this as in all other good Princely qualities, yet after a three months daily practise, he could (having attained the hand) make little use of it; but was fain to devise a hand of his own, wherein the letters were linked for his use: for the other would have made writing but odious to him, as it is to all them that can write none other hand; for they had rather do any thing then write, though with care they could write that hand most faire and lightly, yet by reason of the slow gate thereof, it soon wearies them. Of which number women (for the most part) are, who out of the ignorance of their teachers (for very few or no English teachers write this hand kindly) are perswaded that the dull set Romane is the womans right hand, but nothing lesse; for women naturally have as much facility in joyning, and are as nimble handed in all manuall qualities (to their praise be it spoken) as men. Many of them are Poets, and indite in verse as well as prose with rare commendation: then in their composition, should they use to take up the pen at every letter, they had need to have good memorie, lest their invention should be lost ere they could record it with their pen: for when I am about any such businesse my self, I am fain to neglect the fairenesse of my hand, for the freeness of it to help my memory: so that should some see my first rough hewings in this kinde, (though it be better per-
haps

haps then every one can do) yet little would they think it to be my hand, especially writing (as often I do) in my bed: for as our divine Sir *Philip* well said, ease is the nurse of *Poosie*, which makes many Poets so idle-buffie.

The *Italian* hand therefore (of any forraian Character) I chiefly commend, nay, I preferre it farre before our English secretaries of either kinde, in respect of the generalitie of the use: for alas, out of this kingdome there is no use of our secretary hand, more then that in *France* and *Holland*. It is (perhaps) legible sith as we have vicinity, so it hath affinitie with the French and Dutch hands: But the *Italian* every where in the Christian world is in frequent use, and all our letters of State to forraian parts and Princes, are usually written in that hand, at least as neare as our English secretaries and clerks can performe it therein. This is the character that shewes most boldnesse, freenesse, and bravery of the hand; and who hath this hand at command, may command with facility all other usefull hands.

There is no kingdome but ours that have any more hands in ordinary use as their naturall hand, but one, or at least by that one all may easily be known, as well there, as elsewhere in Christendome: but ours hath (well neare) as many hands as courts of record, and they so strange and different too, that very few of our own people know or can reade them, insomuch that a great Earle of this land once desired me to write him an Alphabet of the Court hand, that so he might thereby (as with a key) open the lock of that hand wherein many of his evidences were written, to read them with more ease: for he said, they were Egyptian Hieroglipicks to him, as indeed they are to most of our English men, though otherwise good scholars, much more to strangers. And these hands are so uncertain in their form, besides that, no two Clerks scarce agree in opinion, which is the right shape of many letters: So that so many hands; so many fashions of one and the same hand (for example the Court hand for one) wherein scarce two Clerks agree in opinion, which is the proper shape of many letters: but it skils not greatly whether they do or no, for it is not much less the Checker, Pipe-office, and I wot not what hand worth the name of a hand, because the verie nature of it and them, are to be written gently and cleanly, in respect of our Secretary, Italian, Romaine, French, Dutch, and other national hands of Christendome, yet those Clerks that know my skill therein, do greatly flatter and decewe me, but by their testimony I write it more naturally then ever they knew teacher: Howbeit I owe so much love and duty to truth, that I can with her allowance





8

and waies give this hand, neither ree excepted agaist, no right hand of fellowship among any of the said nationall hands, no nor so much as suffer them to come in their presence, for too much disgracing the more beautifull hand of mine own country: for among them (the Pipe-office hand especially) they would look like beares not yet lickt into fashion, among deere grown to their greatest beauty. But as it pleaseth the kingdome for reason of state, or some other best known to the chief governours thereof to continue the common law of the land, in that tongue which the Nor. man conquerour imposed on it and them distinct from the mother tongue of the Nation: So do they also permit and maintain, (well neare) all the severall grand-offices belonging to those laws, to use variety of hands: wherewith not onely the Commons and unlearned people, but most of the learned (as I said) of that nation, are altogether unacquainted. But these things being above the (though I am master of the facultie of writing, being my proper element) belong not to me, it is mine office in the common-wealth, to shew how an *a* or *b* should be made, but being made properly, how to employ them as properly, it is besides my profession, the judgement of the leayner must direct him in that.

In this work are divers copies of distinct forms of characters, yet all of them now commonly used here at this day: for such as will learn to write neatly and expeditely without a master, I would advise them to practise the letters (*fac simile*) nine or ten dayes together, and often to go over them with a dry pen, to aquaint their hand with their shape; and albeit it seem (perhaps) somewhat tedious to them to go over them so, yet the profit which they shall soon finde in their practise, will exceed their pain: for by an unperceivable facilitie and promptitude also, the letters will be at their command to make at their pleasure: afterwards they may joyn them together, and imitate the copies of joyned hands which they best fancy, or as shall be most usefull for them.

To give more particular precepts, (as by dead words printed to give directions without the lively words of mouth, and demonstrations correspondent in the view of the leayner) it is to very small or no purpose; for no words can be so plain, but they will perplex the understanding in unfolding the intricacie of some letters to the learner unacquainted with the mystery of this facultie. Besides, I should so (perhaps) seem to offer much prejudice to very many poore men, that onely live by teaching to write, and so incurre their mortall hate, which though it cannot hurt me

in likelihood, yet I would decline it as much as I could, at least not give them so just cause of hazard: howbeit could my precepts in print, and demonstrations thereto adjoyned effect a more generall good in the common-wealth, then the hate of these particular men could do me hurt; I would willingly do the first, and endure the latter. But in truth it is not worth the while to give other direction or demonstration then this before expressed, as may copiously appeare by many copy-books set forth by strangers, with (as they thought) most easie precepts, and demonstrations in print, to instruct the learner piece by piece: when for all that, daily experience tells the learners by them, the demonstrations seem so intricate (though never so plainly expressed with their help of printed unrespiring words) that little or no use can the unexpert make of them, sith they very hardly (if at all) conceive them: as for the expert, they nothing need them; and for the reasonably practised, they can imitate without them: yet take these generall rules with you, which may both help some teachers, and all learners, and may be easily conceived, and born in memory, *viz.*

All letters that have any compasses, and contain any whites within them (as, *a d e g o s* &c.) or, (*a b d g q o*, &c. must be of one bignesse, and so of other hands whatsoever.

All letters that have any stems or heads above the upper line before spoken of, (as *b b k l f f* &c.) or (*b b f k l f* &c.) must be of one height.

All letters that have any tailes straight or reversed beneath the lines, (as *g h f y* or *p q f y* &c.) must be of one depth.

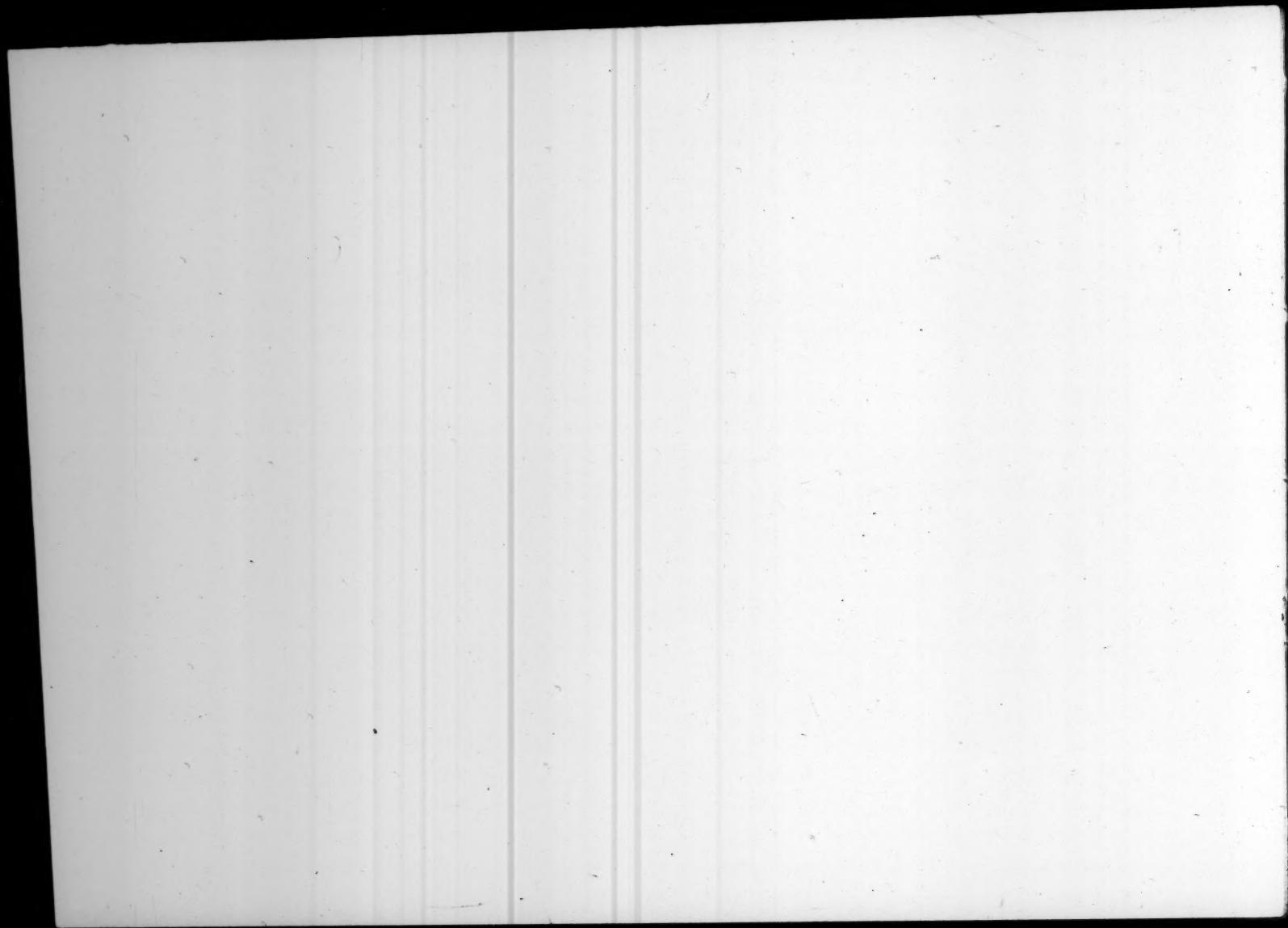
The letters must not be too fat or too lean (that is too full or too slender) for their depth; for the first makes them look like dwarfs, all belly; and the last like long leane starvelings, without flesh or belly.

Thrice the breadth of the master-stroke of the minnum in the set secretary hand should be his depth: and so of the text hands, bastard or set, as also of the court-hand, chancery, &c.

In the english set secretary hand, likewise the black or master-strokes of these letters, *b f h k l t f* &c. must be twice as full as the master-stroke of the minnum. The same is to be observed also in the court-hand.

The letters must be kept even at foot and at head, and stand equidistant, a small o's space being left between each word.





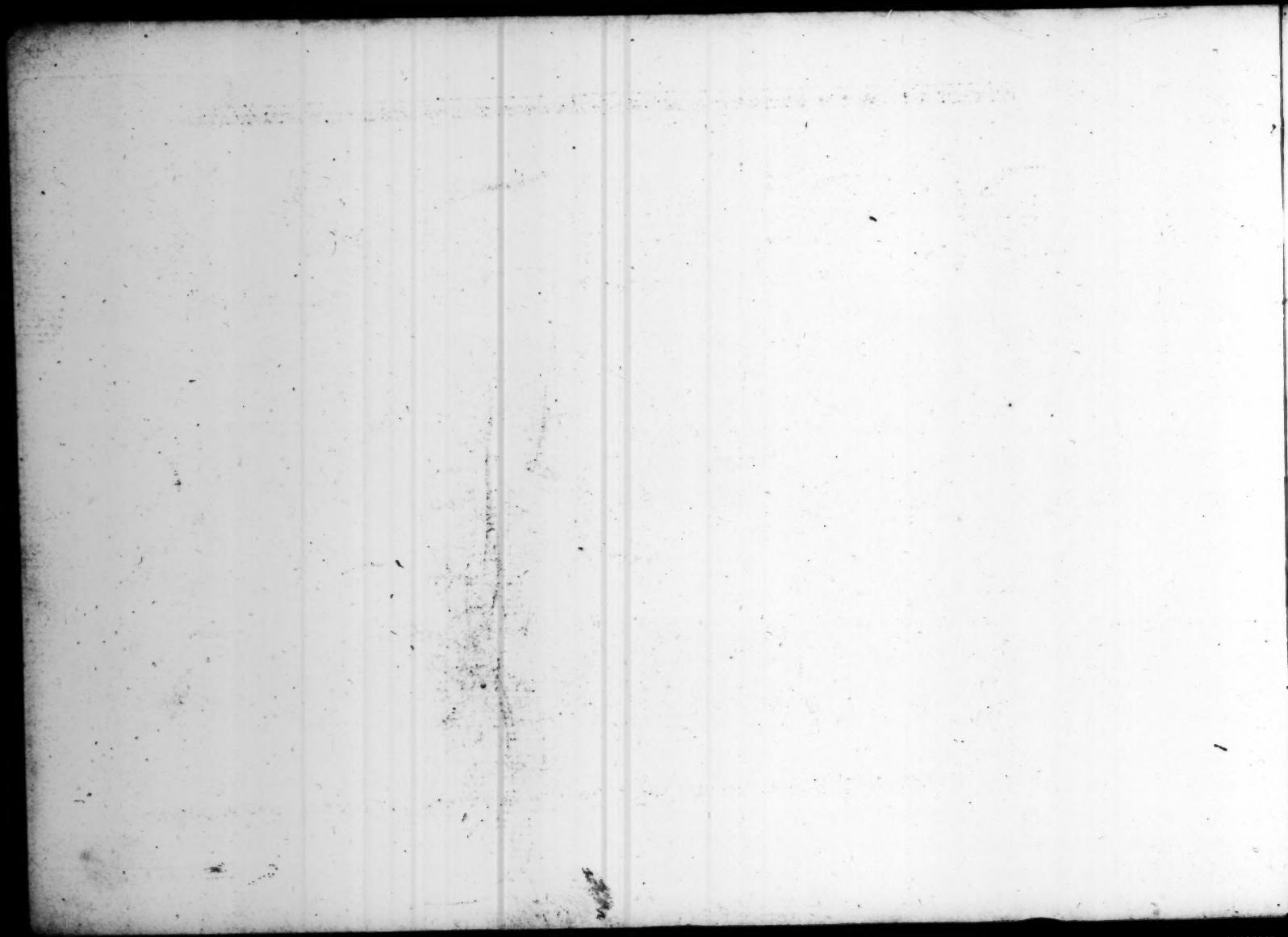
9

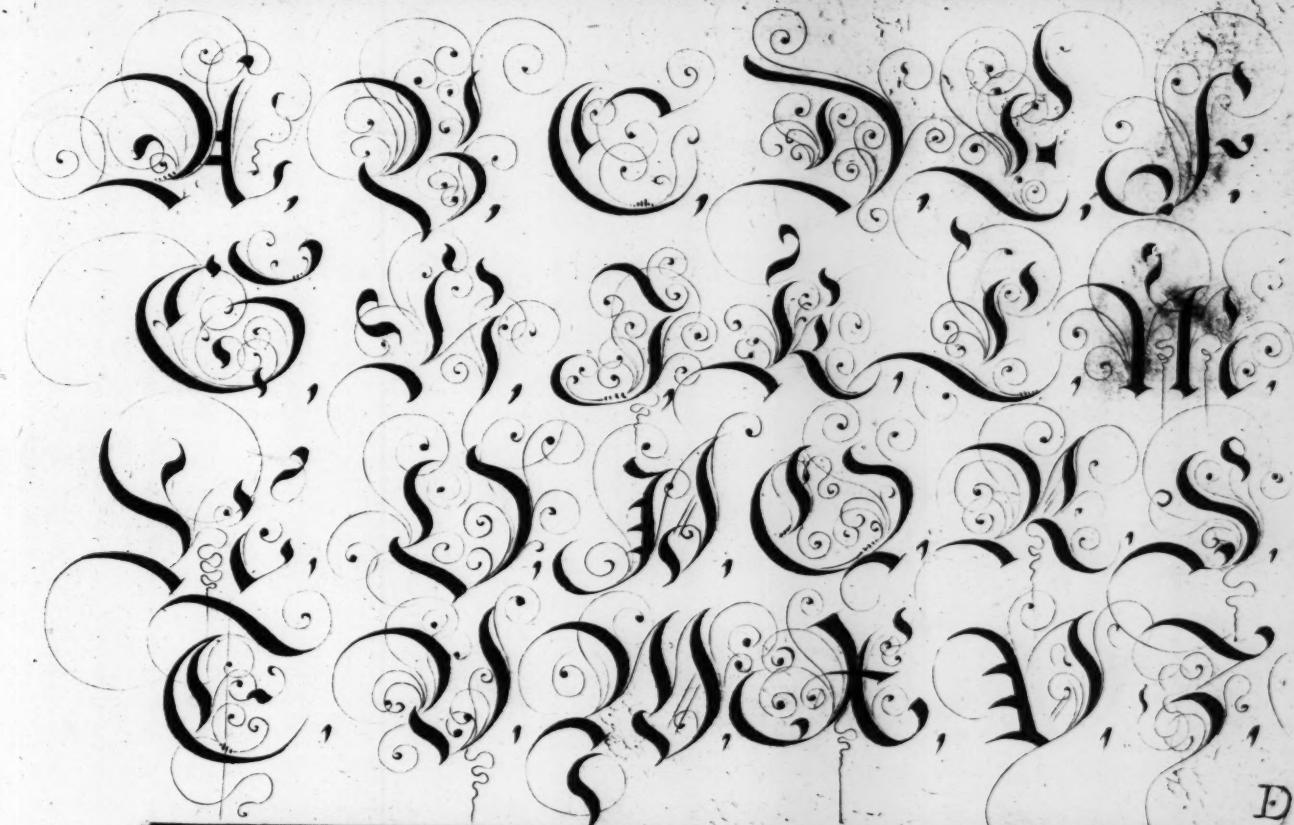
In these rules consist the geometrical proportion of faire and exact writing, in the english set
secretary hand, and whoso observes them, shall make this hand inchant the eye of the beholder
with exceeding delight: for (*nolens volens*) it will dote on the seldom-seen beauty thereof.

Now there is not the veriest bungler that professeth the pen in this kinde, but will say (I am sure, or else they have lost their old audacity and much taking upon them) that they knew all these rules before, when I dare lay my little worth to nothing, if they durst be sworne for the decision of the truth, and would truely sweare, that no one of this kingdome knew them all, but whom I have instructed; and howsoever they may (perhaps) snuffe at this truth (for truth gets hatred her old lot) yet their consciences are witnessies it is no lie I affirm. But now they have it, and much good may do them with it, for they can make better use of it, then every learner: which they cannot do neither without learning, to better some of their teaching. The corrupte nature of man is so insolent, that we are ashamed to confesse our ignorance, though it be as palpable as *Egyptian* darkness: and so we can handle the matter onely to seem, we little or nothing respect truely to be, when (were we as we should) we should affect the clean contrary: for to know and acknowledge our own ignorance, is a fair testimony of wisedome and indowment.

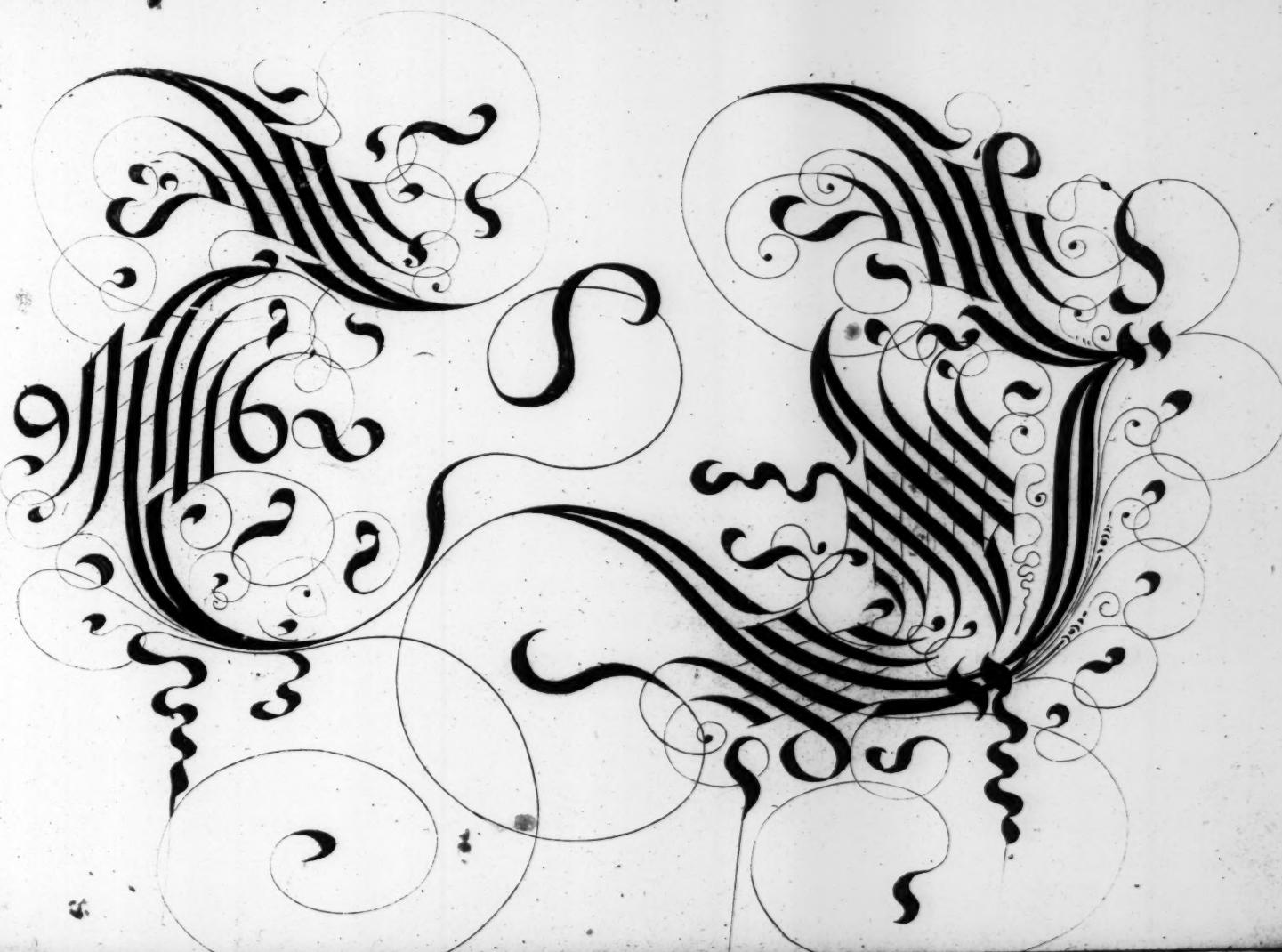
Well, God help me and all that are travelled, nay, over-ridden with this mentall disease; and send us the modesty of that prince of philosophers (the wisest of men by Gods testimony) that said after all this restlesse search after knowledge he finally knew this, that he knew nothing.

Now it remaineth that I intreat all that shall profit by this my pains, to give thanks to God to whom alone they belong, for I am but as the pen in his hand, who performed all that which is good herein. The evill (if any be) is mine own, for which return me (on Gods Name) the shame it deserves: yet in thy charity (who ere thou art that shalt make use of this book) pray to God for me (as I will for thee) to amend my misles, that we may (without fault) one everlasting day meet where we shall know all things without error, and in that knowledge, love and imbrace each other, *Amen.*





1890
1891
1892



26

After my verie hertie commenacions. Whereas yo
hast communitation with me concerning yo late
out conseruante concerning that busynesse is unhap
pisc communitate unto M. Hartyn & Brommeng
of Denmeys tode who is verie willing to calde is
vpon vpon any reasonable termes, and bee yo tenat.

John Danies of Heref.

F

A decorative initial 'C' with intricate scrollwork and a small 'y' and 'p'.

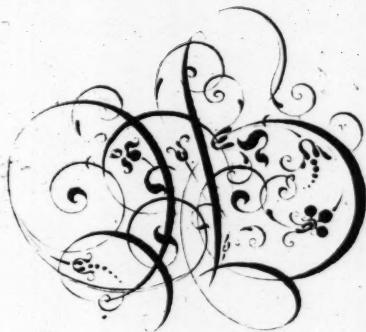
7

Y loving and most beving Lor give me contineval
per se examein in this merte and I will examein onel
ximere the wate off this contineval; and v
loving merites will I haue bee vinnifist off. I.
Hane I hosen the immate way off this upright
contineval; contineval wither in ex. 2.

John Davis

123. *Exodus* 13. 12. *Leviticus* 27. 31. *Deuteronomy* 14. 29. *Exodus* 13. 12. *Leviticus* 27. 31. *Deuteronomy* 14. 29.



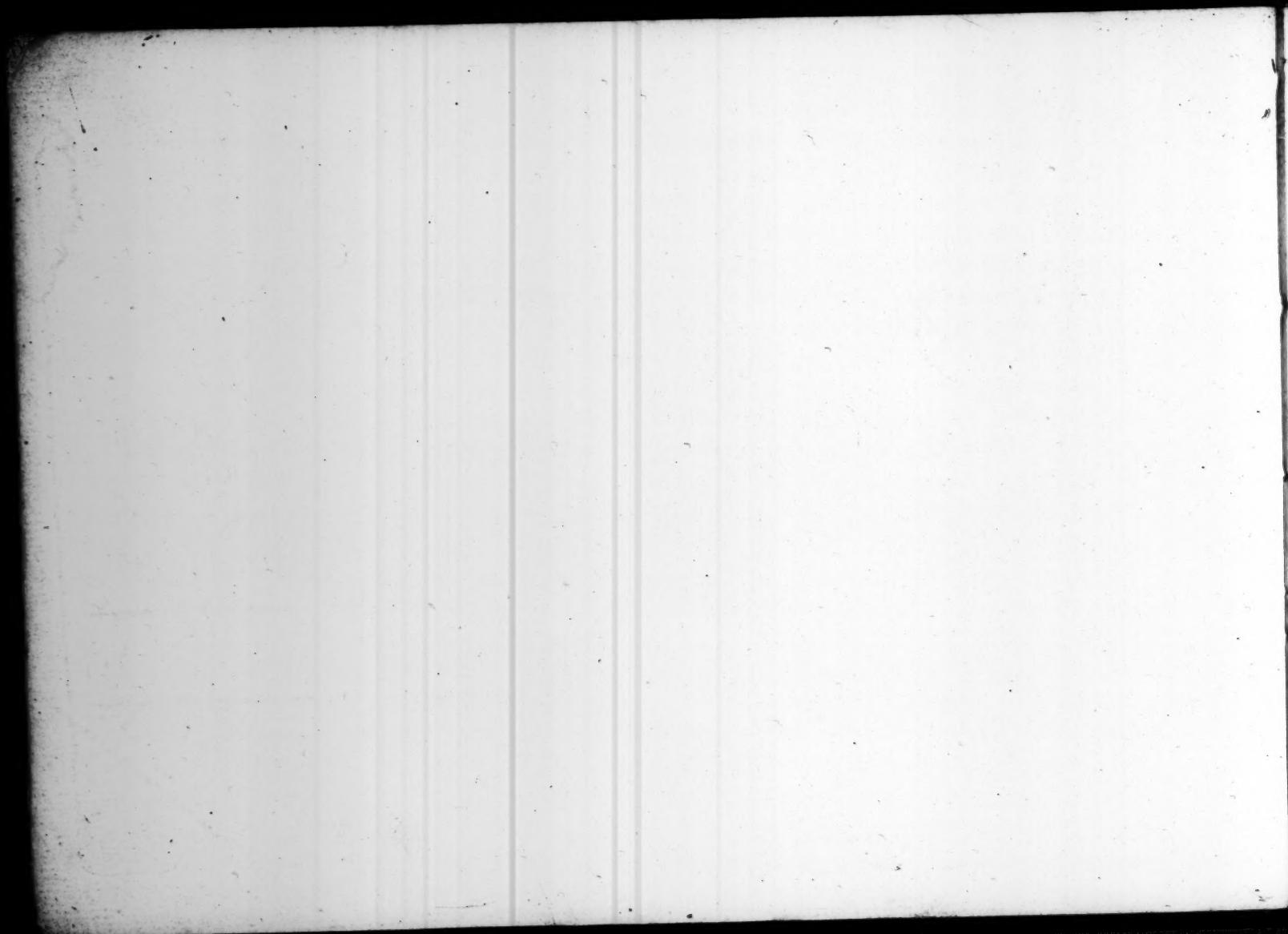


yne more in affect; or in anie mannes innocerathie
taken impaixeth mannes memorie, contaminateh his
mine & mannes with manie ysolutiois, poureth into
the ymaginatiue poire of the Sonle innumerable vi-
sions opinions, and bringeth foorth sluggishnesse et.

H.a.b.r.o.e. f.y.g.h.i.l.l.m.u.o.p.q.r.e.s.t. v.u.w.y.v.z.e?

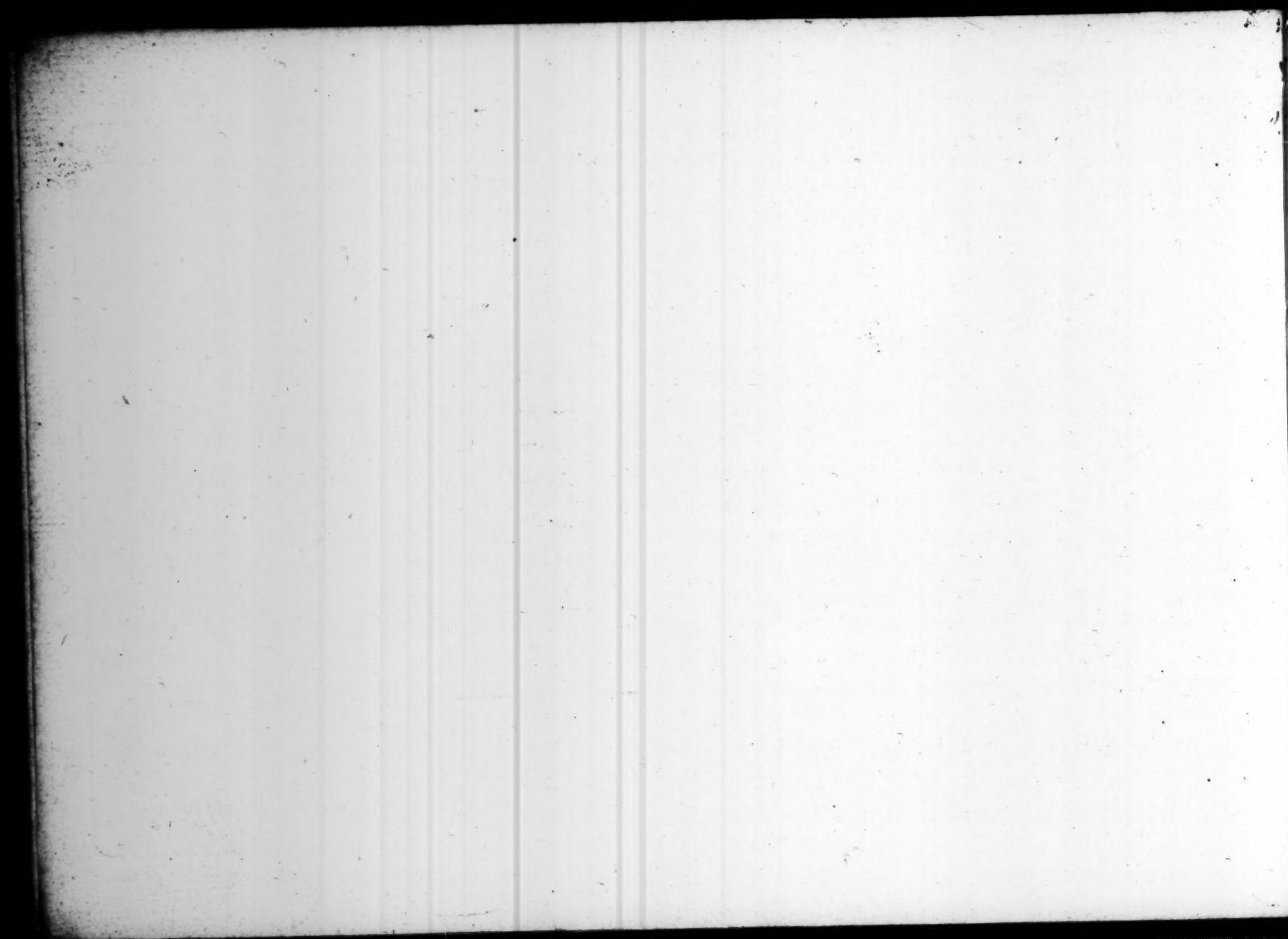
Sirr Quicke of Heres:

H



o all true yppian people to whomde this p[re]sent writing or in-
strument shall come I Mathanell Penmerton & Squier do by these
p[re]sentes give and grant to my deare & approued good seruant
Mathanell Penmerton all that my allame of Orage

John Davies
J.



numerable ax^e The amioynted, inconmodities, wranglings,
indamnuagments, and inconveniences with everid^e moment of
lynd^e accompanid^e this momentane^e valse of regisitorid^e and
momentane^e vanitie^e & rare is the ordinary meane to
shunne and avoide these greevous inconmodities & evills &

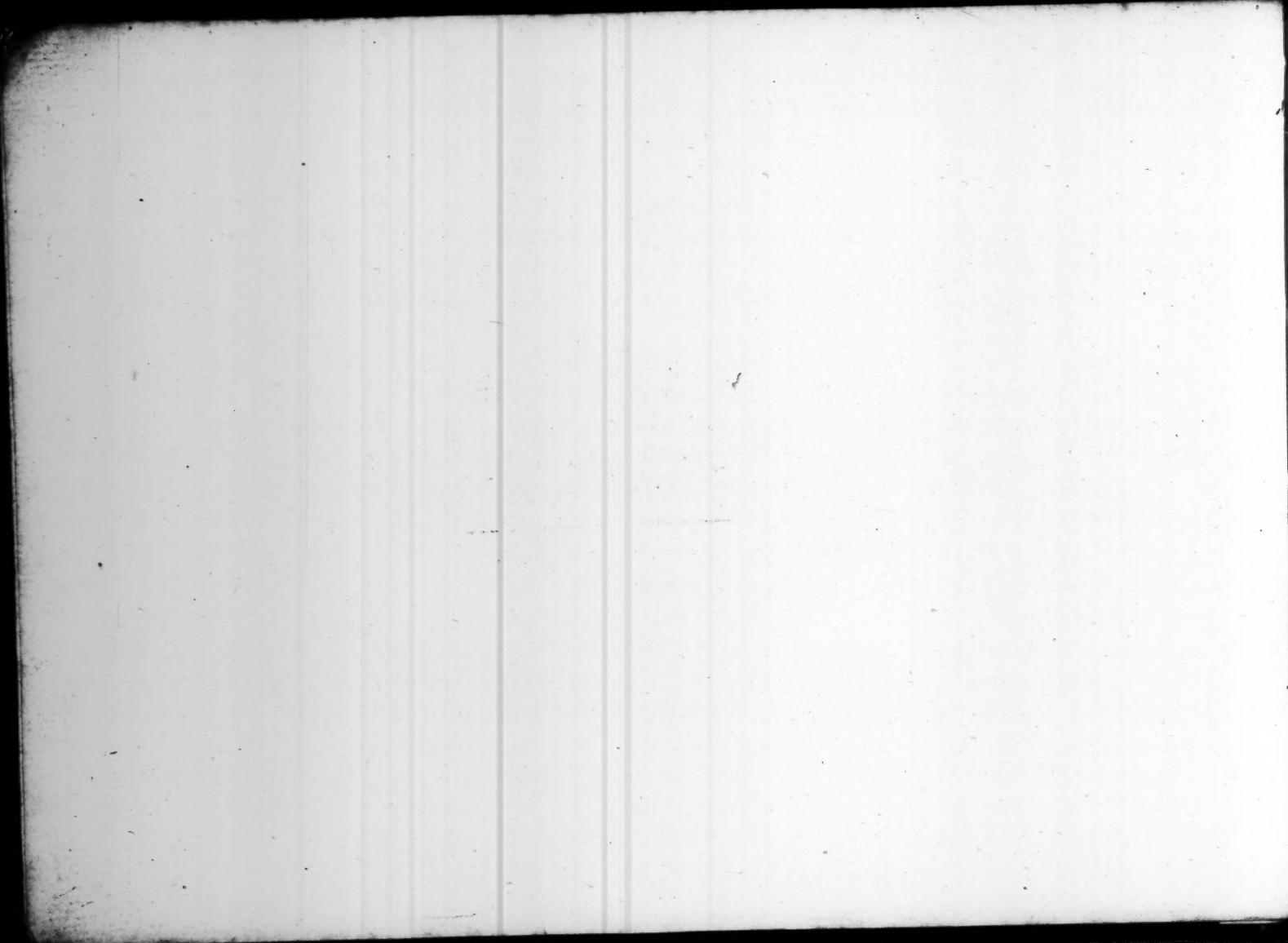
See Delle.

K

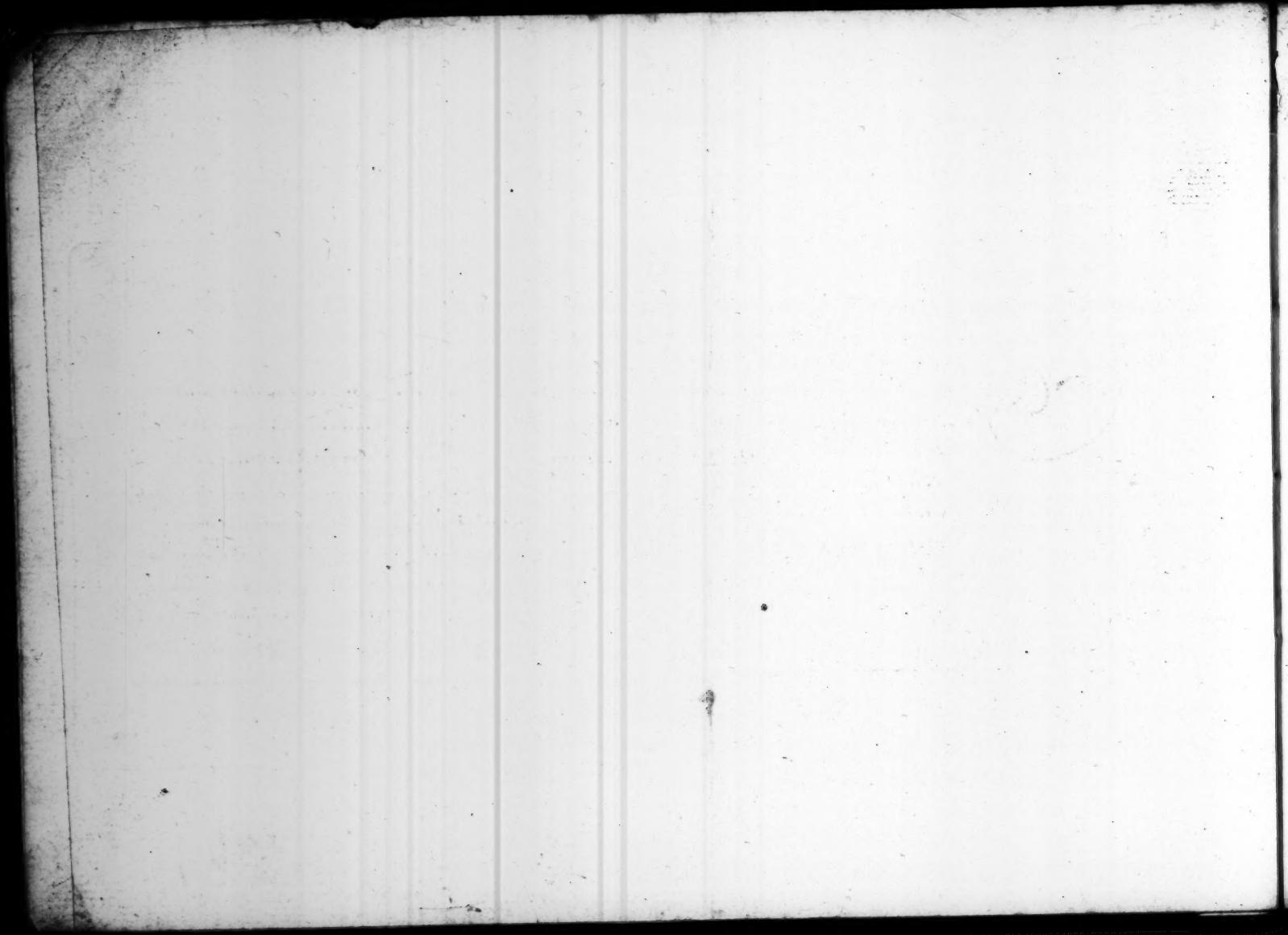


2
Coverunt omnes per presentes nos Johanneum Beconiuem de Almaine lati-
zum Hunsfordum Denningtonum de Almaine gammagb. in comitatu de Hereford
genescemur. Tenuerunt et iurantes obligari Edmundo Exoniensem et Lissing
in com. predictis genescis. in Comitatu mercede bonorum legat monete Anglie sol-
vend eisdem. Edmundo autem suo recto Instrumento heredatione ex citoxibz vel assigna-
tis suis. Ad quam quidem solutioem bene et fideliter satienuerunt. Obligamus nos re-

Si: Davies of Hereford.

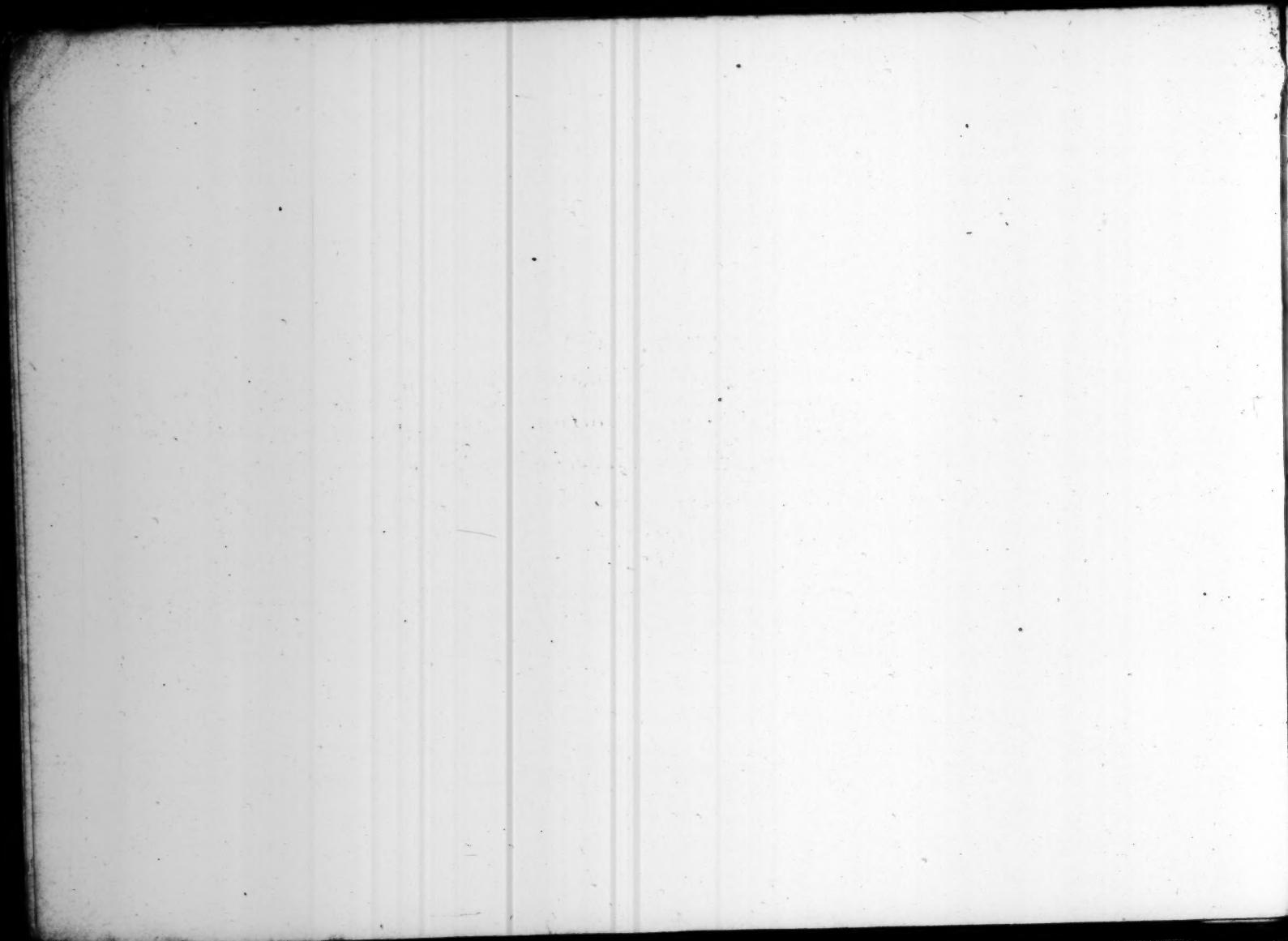


Hoc videlicet quod videlicet me Johannu de commonit de Mowington in
 Comitatu Monit et comitatu Brugianum, tenet et faciat obligari Wicco
 Maynbaringe de Montere et ammadi in domo Cheshire gentoso in
 videtur in brevi bono et equal monte Anglie solvendi etiam Wicco aut suo etate
 Attumato videlicet doctibnibz sole et signatis suis. Hoc quam videlicet
 solutioem bonis et fidelitatis faciens obligo me s' credo eximto et
 videlicet faciat ipsa videlicet me. Vigeat et certum dia Novembre anno
 Regni Domini mei Jacobi dei gra Regis francie et hibernie Regis
 Anglie et Baledie aut delveras in spes presentioris et ei personis sive



for my Socie Cartie recommendatione, forasmuche that Sam Hoddy exec-
cibly given to understand by the relation of a loving neighbour and
friend Martine Greshamstone of Hamptone in the countie of
Northampton, that was sometime a dwceing place; that ye are
expoysoned to alienate yo^e spurce in Browningstone-mappone-
w^e if yo^e bee ther of yo^e countie fynnesse, I beseeche yo^e v-
mice lade me same for my money owinge ad any other wher for it

Rev. Dr. M. of Leesford.



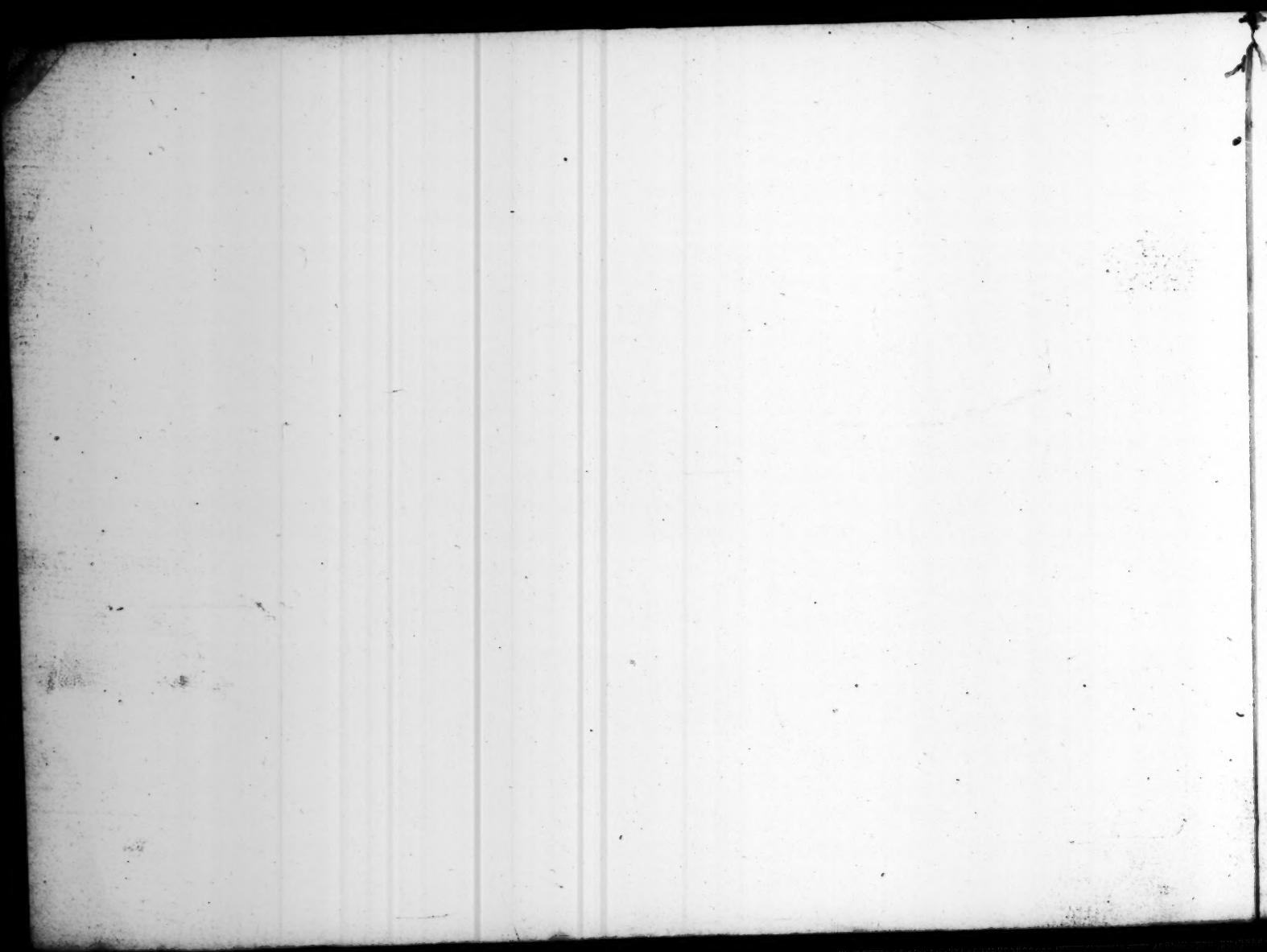
14

S

amentably complaingne shewinge unto yo Lovable good Lo: yo poore
Suppliante Johnninc the committellme of Londoner in
the countie of Hereford husbandman And, Willmone Tavissone
of Moningtoncarpenter: That he haue yo said poore
Suppliante beane beane in one Obligation of the summe of
one hundred romys for the payment of two moeys to to

To Danes of Heref

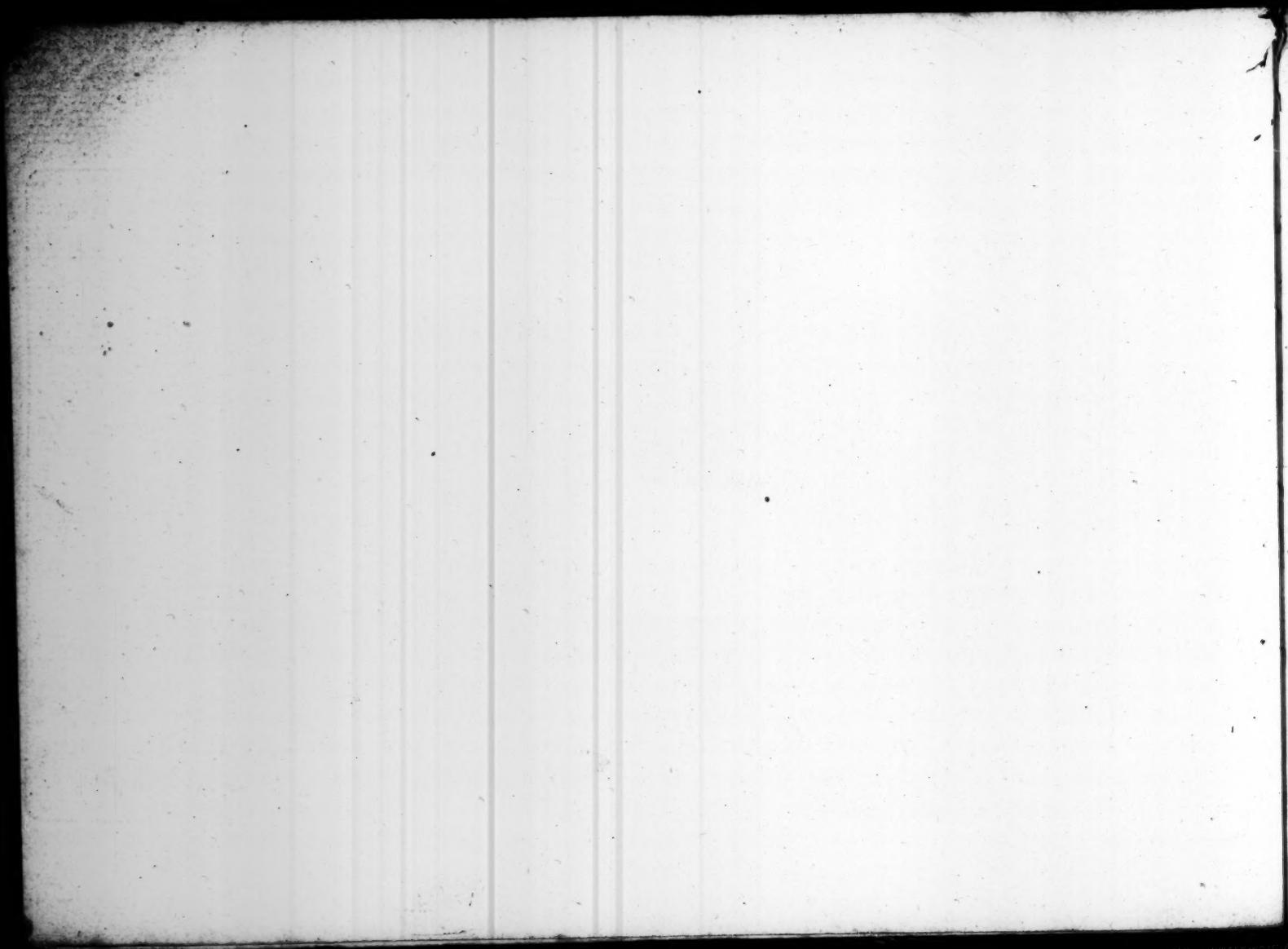
o



13
22
airit y^e please y^e Honourable^{reverend} Sir to be^e advertised that upon y^e seavng
v^e this instant 13th September, doos hapened to y^e selfe for fyshe water
in y^e fles^e of ¹³ Dellen, y^e selfe in countre^e to y^e many adver-
tised amon^g y^e stth was one mth y^e name remitter to y^e quth, becaus^e
y^e man would have y^e satisfied in that adverture report may p^{re}dicted^{be} y^e p^{re}nt

Go: Davies of Hereford.

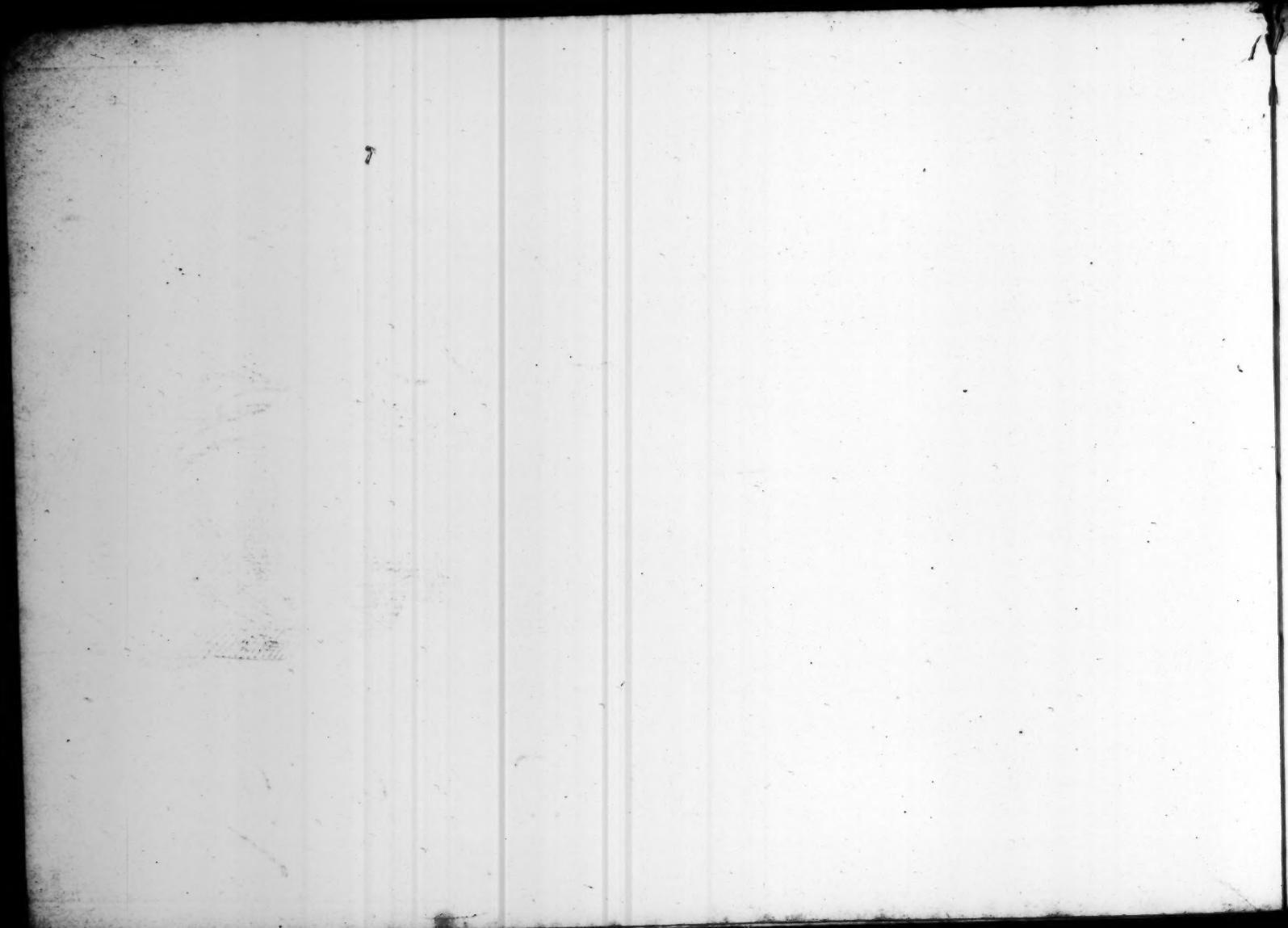
P



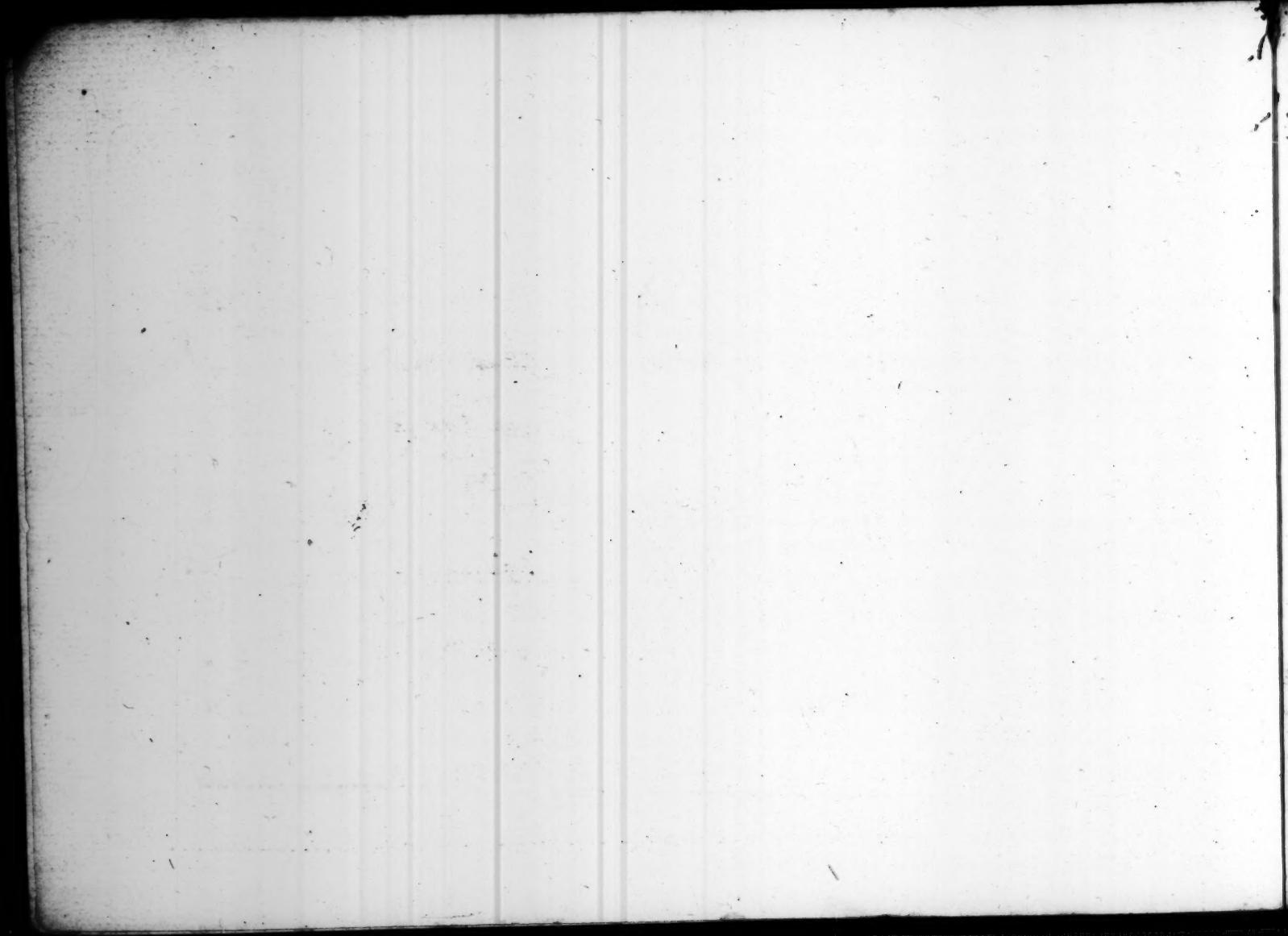
17

It is a most commendable & convenient
writing rule the pen species as in
this present
entire man
rice of
example

Jo: Davies Serip: Fran: Gysen ram
sculps: R

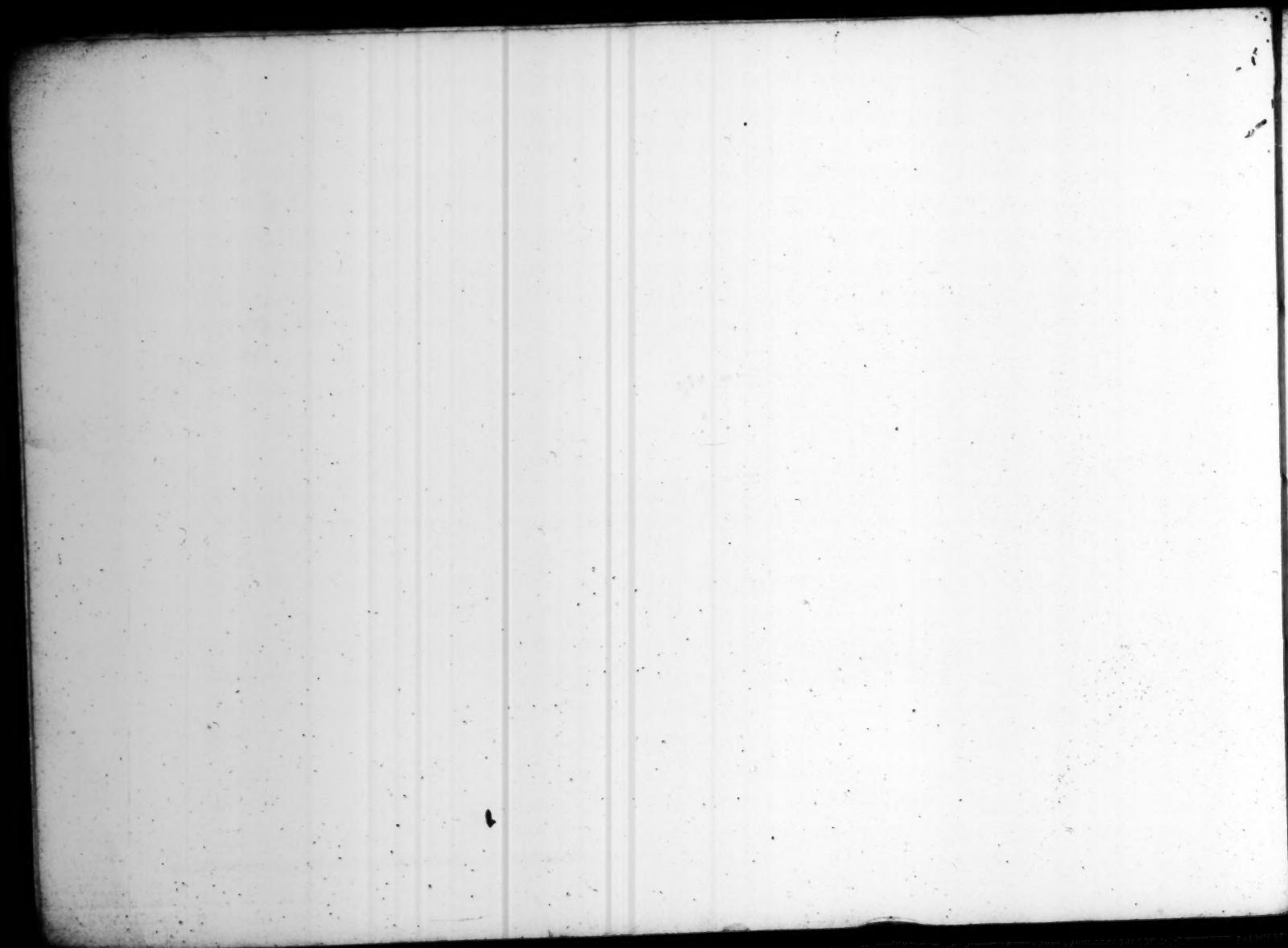


A. A. B. B. C. C. D. D. E. E. F.
F. G. G. H. H. I. I. K. K. L. L.
M. M. N. N. O. O. P. P. P. Q.
Q. R. R. S. S. T. T. T. V. V.
V. W. W. X. X. Y. Y. Z. Z.



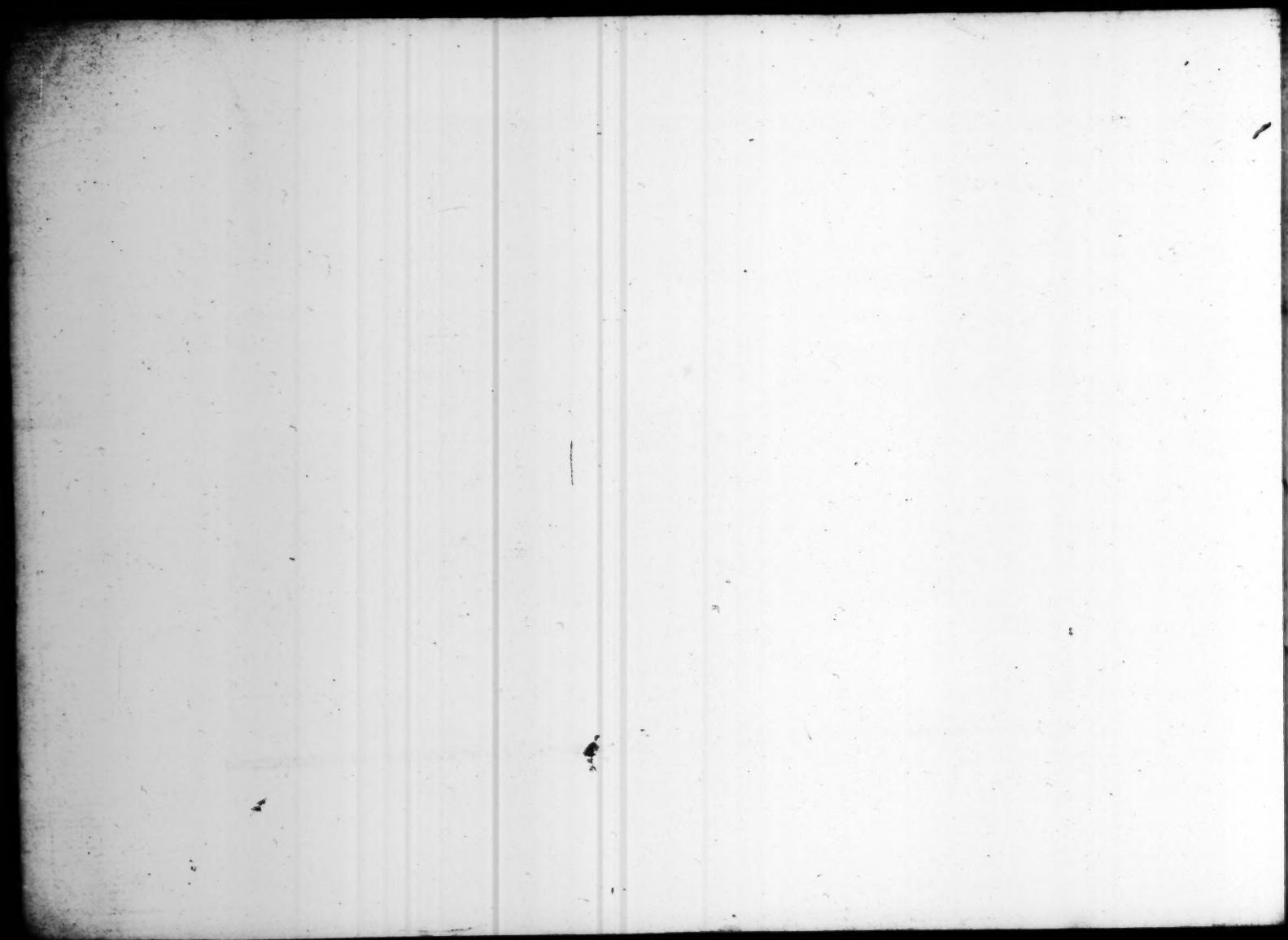
Before I was humbled, I committed sinne and demeaned my selfe
 verie much amisse; but since o' omnipotent creator of all things
 I haue kept thine commaundementes; the obseruation whereof
 bringeth with it immortall rewards. Make mee therefore
 obedient to thine immaculate commaundements, my daiely studie.

A. a. a. b. b. c. c. d. d. e. e. e. f. f. f. g. g. g. h. h. i. k. k. k. l. m. n.
 o. p. p. que. q. r. r. s. s. s. t. t. v. v. v. u. u. w. w. w. x. x. y. y. z. z. z.
 Po. Da.



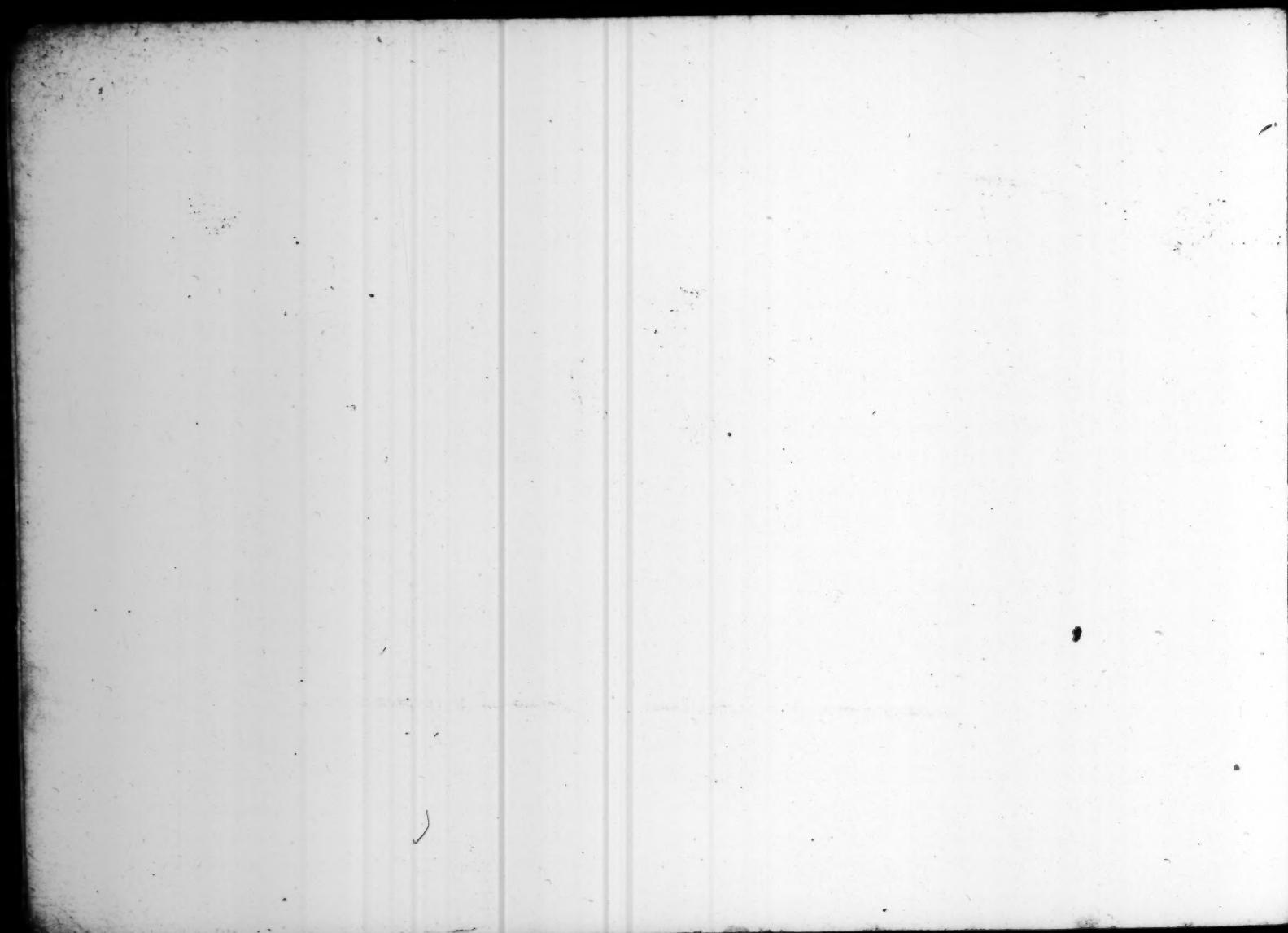
I haue chosen the cleane and most immaculate waie
of thie commaundements; I haue not forgotten thy
testimoni: Remoue from mee the way of iniqui-
tie; and according to thie commaundementes direct
thou me: Pleadethou my cause o' omnipotent Ieso-
ua: for manie are mine enemis, o' lord, thou knowest.

Io: Davies.



The honor due vnto parents, is none otherwise to bee vnder-
stooded, but to iudge commendable, reuerentlie, &
honorably of our parents; and to esteeme well of all
theire doings, not onelie as of elders, but principally
because they bee parents whome god vseid as instrumēts
to bring vs to this transitorie beeing whiche we haue:

To Davies of Herf.



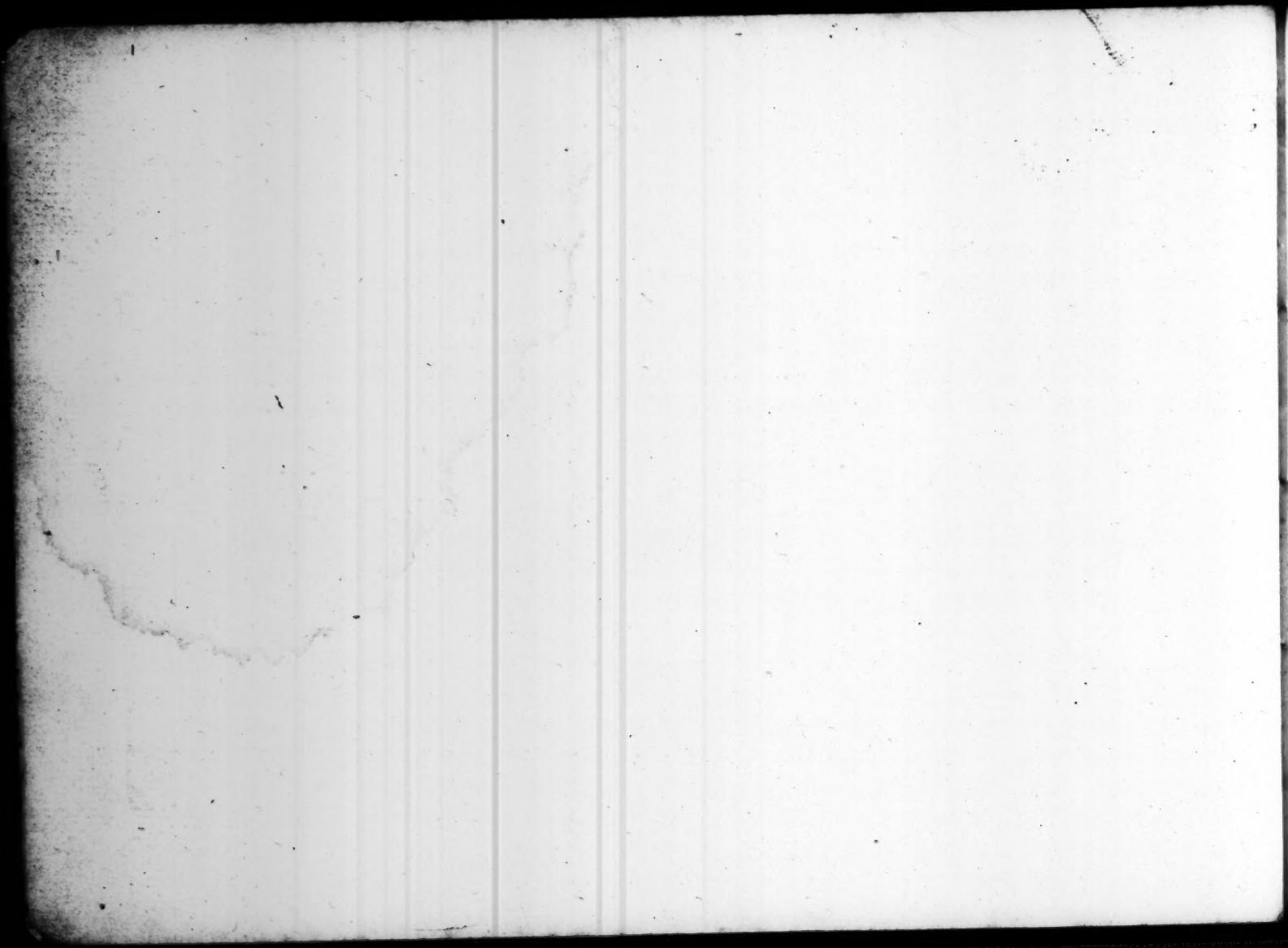
Ennimerable are the
greuances, and incumbrances
which every moment of tyne
doe accompanie this fraile life.

A, a, a, b, b, c, c, d, d, e, e, f, f, g, g, h, h,
i, i, k, k, l, l, m, m, n, n, o, o, p, p, q, q, r, r,
s, s, t, t, v, u, w, w, x, x, y, y, z, z.

Sapientia est eternum admiratum et immutabile scientia constitutio.
Est enim quaevis ars causa sit: ex quo efficere, ad finem intentum,
etiamen in ea interior virtus dicitur. In altera emulatur sapientia
eternum est sapientia: et causa artem. Pro eo vero Philosophus non
dicitur quod illud a Deo immortales habens natus p. brevis et minus
finita secundum 38.

et. Davies.

Aa

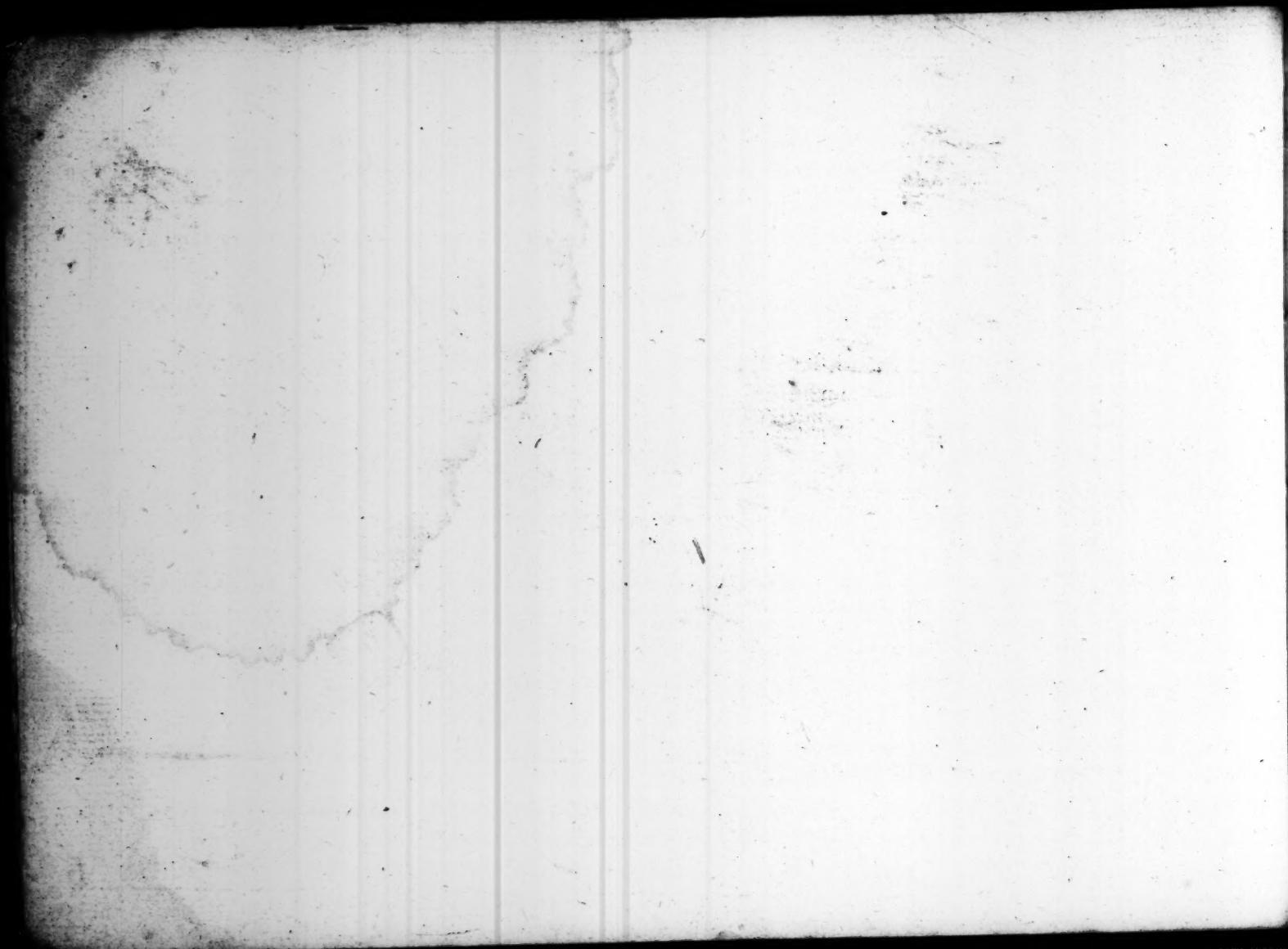


25
Gio. Francesco Diminuito mio amorevolissime Melia anni, multa fata
ca. et Melia carta loco consumato per ritrouare, inueni caratteri certiui cancell
lari Romani, da me poi posti in uso et insegnati come brevissimi sapete. Ho
ra a giouamento. che beneficio d'ogni uno miei parso eueniente, et farne sta
pare et intagliare, con mia grandissima spesa le presenti forme uelocissime,
et con esse leuere et facilissime regole: alle quali accostandoui, et seroseende
dalla sua stentata, et affettata, che impigre se la mano, ui accresceret in que
se.

Vo' come s'ella Affection^{me}

Io. Danie^{se}.

Sabbat^o et festi. S. E. i. k. L. m. n. o. p. q. r. r. s. t. t. u. v. w. x. y. y. z. G.
B^B.



James Monnington your seruaunte Thomas Beomount
and Ferdinand Bonmerson came immediatly upon the receipt
of M^r Mountgomeryes lees, to deauande the money whiche I
have mine honest not-yet-impeached word for; See hat^s sent the
moitie of your summe; and I haue made out the other moitie

W^r: Davies of Hereford.

cc

2. 112. 77

27
It will be graunt to victory and thine ne-
mr frs to save your honne & the by shipt to some
place impregnable as it were in the wile saies t.
A prudent martialist per mits t. to rest; but
immediatly assault wile soe is in immotrate
haste; lest permitting him to gather head against

John John Davies of Hereford dd



Preserue mee o'immaculate and immortall Person
in walking in y' waic of y' commaundementes whiche
is the waic that continuallie conducts to sempiterne
blessednesse and immortall Happinesse. Make
me to runne in the uncontaminated paths of the euer
most gloriouse commaundementes, and rigtous preceptes.

John Davies of Hereford. Ec